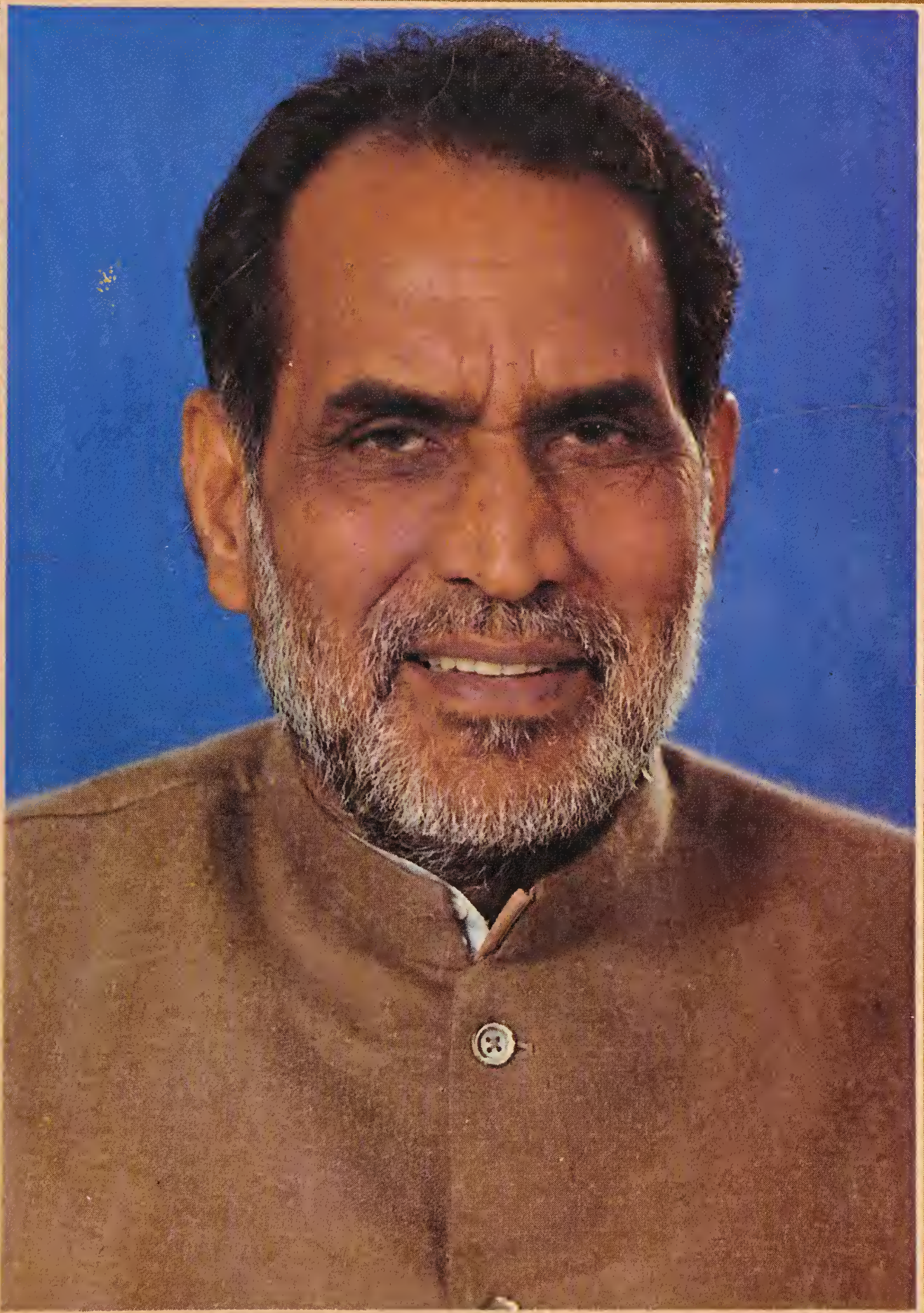


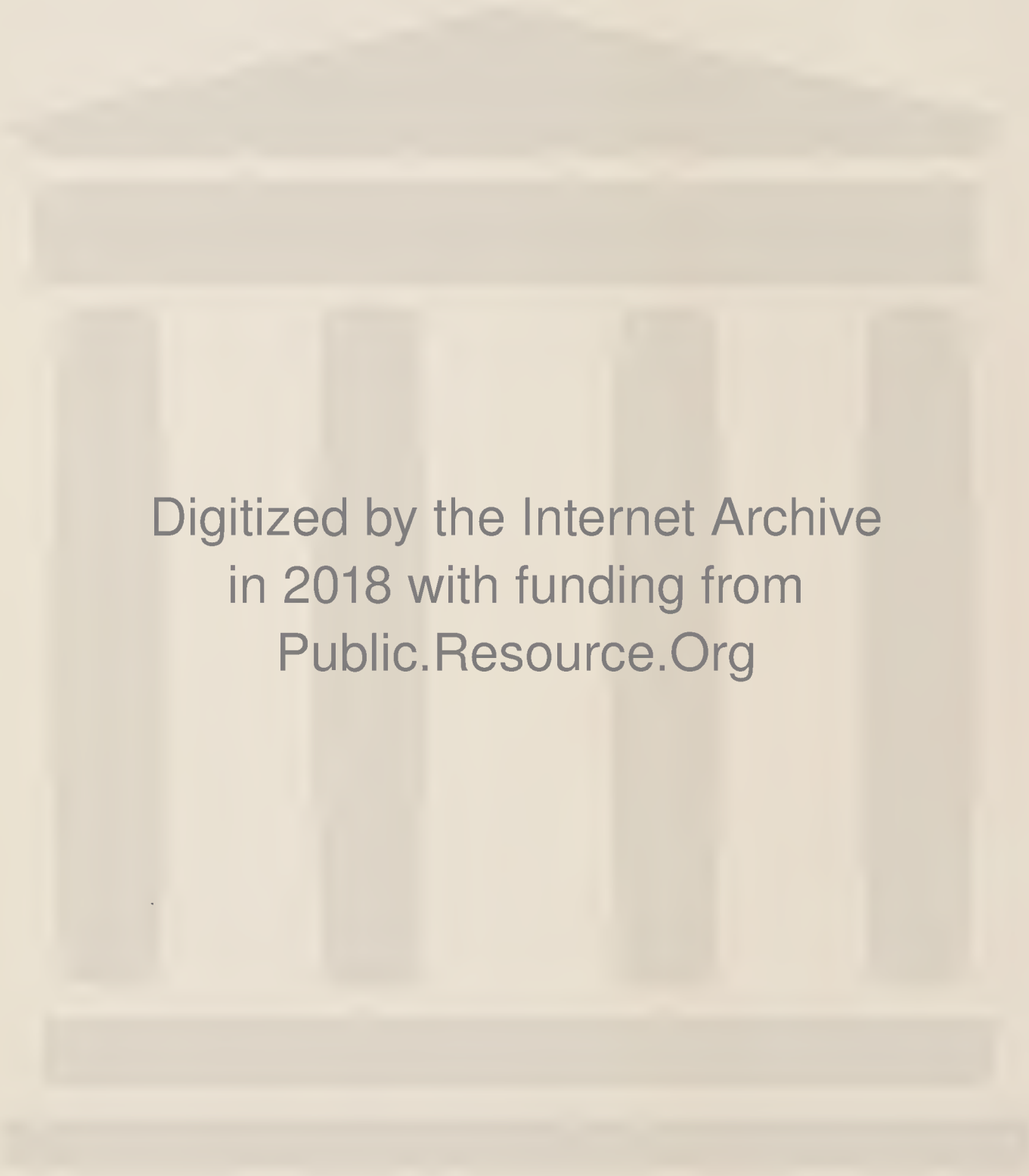
CHANDRA SHEKHAR

SELECTED SPEECHES
1990-91



This volume presents a selection of the speeches of Shri Chandra Shekhar as Prime Minister from November 1990 to June 1991.

The speeches focus on a wide range of themes of national and global importance. These reflect a part of the historical process through which modern India is passing.



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CHANDRA SHEKHAR

SELECTED SPEECHES 1990-91

**PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
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Publisher's Note

Shri Chandra Shekhar was Prime Minister of India from November 1990 to June 1991. This volume includes a selection of speeches delivered by him during this period. Those delivered in Hindi appear here in translation.

The speeches cover a wide variety of national and international issues and are arranged in chronological order.

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A Better Future for Children

I AM VERY happy to be here. In these days of gloom and despair, the smiling faces of children give us hope and confidence. They are the future of India—a happy and prosperous India. A child's smile gives us the message that if there is God, He is not disappointed with mankind. A child's laughter, enthusiasm and spirit of adventure gives us the hope that mankind will rise above all odds and march towards a bright future on the path of love and friendship.

On the one hand we have institutions like Bal Bhavan which endeavours to bring out the latent talent of the children. I congratulate the staff of the Bal Bhavan for the commendable work they are doing. On the other hand I am reminded of those children who are devoid of even basic facilities of life. Every child has a right to get at least pure drinking water, wholesome food and some milk; educational facilities when he grows up and provision for medical facilities when he falls ill. It is the duty of the society to provide these facilities. I am sorry to say, we have not been able to realize the vision of Jawaharlal Nehru so far. There is nothing more demeaning and shameful than the fact that even today in the land of Jawaharlal, the children are helpless and neglected.

Plans for development are being made and will be made but a society which wants to rise should first pay its attention to children.

Free rendering of speech in Hindi, delivered at Bal Bhavan on Children's Day,
New Delhi, 14 November 1990

If not today, after 14-20 years, history will take cognisance of their doings. We talk of egalitarian society, we want to build India of Jawaharlal Nehru's dream, but have we ever thought of disparities in our society? On the one hand there are children who study in the most expensive schools and on the other there are children in the remote villages who do not have even an access to the schools. Let alone twenty years, at the pace we are moving, I am afraid we will not be able to establish an egalitarian society even in fifty years.

I request the Secretary of the Education department to direct the Officers dealing with primary education, to give priority to the small children. It is our duty to bring joy in their lives. The significance of observing Jawaharlal Nehru's birth anniversary as Children's Day is that we must try to ensure that the schemes for development of children should not suffer because of lack of funds—even if it means discontinuing or postponing other developmental activities.

I must say that the officials of the Bal Bhavan are doing a commendable work but their activities should not remain confined to the capital city of Delhi only. I would like them to reach all the villages, the remotest areas of the country. Our brethren in the backward regions should also be inspired to take up such activities. The cultural programmes by the children of the Bal Bhavan have impressed me. I am, therefore, sure that if the same is carried to the remote villages of this country, it will not only bring joy to the children there, but will also dispel the atmosphere of gloom and despair gripping the country, and thus enliven the people.

There is a belief amongst our rural folk that if a child smiles at a dying man, he gets a new lease of life. Our lawgivers have said that even those who are cruel to the offspring of animals, leave aside the human children, commit a great sin. Perhaps we do not realize how cruel we have been, either knowingly or unknowingly to our children. Today the children roaming in our lanes and bylanes, begging on the streets and in railway compartments reproachfully ask us, "Where is your dream of new India? What has happened to Jawaharlal's vision? Where is that egalitarian society of Gandhi? What has happened to the complete revolution of Jayaprakash Narayan? What has happened to the education scheme of Acharya

Narendra Dev under which crores of children were to find new hope and confidence?"

Let us pledge on this day, that no child will remain neglected, no child will be helpless and no child will be deprived of basic necessities of life.

The talent displayed by the boys and girls of this institution is our legacy. It is today's strength and tomorrow's hope. On the basis of that hope, we will build a new India. I assure you on the birth anniversary of Jawaharlal Nehru that we will do our best to build India of his vision and realize the future he had dreamt for the children of India.

On the Path of Progress

MY FELLOW COUNTRYMEN, I have come to make an appeal. You are the strength of today and hope of tomorrow. Upon your shoulders depend the future of this country. It is true that we are facing a difficult time—difficult time in many ways. The most difficult problem before the nation is that there is a sense of apprehension in the minds of many people. Our minorities feel apprehensive because they feel that their life is not secure. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes people are not able to lead a life of dignity. Our backward classes feel that they are not getting their due from the society. Our young men and women feel that they are not getting an opportunity to contribute to the production of this nation and lead a life of dignity and honour. These are the problems which are staring us in the face. In spite of all our efforts during the last four decades we have not been able to remove hunger, poverty, squalor and misery from this land. This is unfortunate. Indeed, it is shameful.

Nature has bestowed upon us everything possible. We have a fertile land, we have a good climate and we have got all the natural resources that are required for the development, prosperity and progress of this nation. Above all, we have the biggest asset, the manpower. Our people are ready to work. Our toiling masses, farmers and workers work hard but in spite of that they are not

getting a better future for themselves. Our biggest asset, manpower, has to be taken care of. If we have to build a new India, we will have to invest in man. When I talk of investing in man, our first priority should be the care of the child. Every child that comes to this world should get clean water, necessary calories for its growth, elementary education, primary health services. If these are provided to every child, it will grow into a healthy citizen.

There is the outmoded system of caste and unfortunately in our country people are discriminated on this basis. Religion is another dividing factor. This should change. Any discrimination on the basis of caste and religion has to be eliminated. Then only we can provide equal opportunity to all our young men and women to contribute for the progress of this country. While taking care of these things, we should remember that we are a scarce resource society. Therefore, we have to decide how to invest our resources—whether these resources are going to meet the basic minimum needs of our people or we are going to squander it away for the ostentatious living of a few. We have a clear choice.

There is no alternative. Gandhiji taught us austerity. Austerity is not a mere slogan. It is an economic strategy because without the willing cooperation of our people, we cannot produce more. Without producing more, we cannot increase the wealth of our country. In a democratic set-up, willing cooperation of the people is possible only when we give them the confidence that what they produce, will be utilized for the better future of their children—not for the ostentatious living of a few.

I want to appeal to all those who are privileged in one way or the other that everybody will have to share poverty as long as it is there. I don't mean that they should not get the facilities for better functioning but they should convince the people who are hard-working that they are concerned about their future, and the future of their children. So the whole economic strategy has to be changed.

There is a talk of liberalisation in this country. Liberalisation is a must. But liberalisation for what? If it means that there should be no curb on the initiative of the people, it is welcome. If it means that there should be no red-tapism and corruption, it should be adhered

to. But if it means that scarce resources are to be squandered away, it should not be allowed. We should realize that we are in a position where we cannot be bailed out by others. I think that in many areas we shall require help from people outside. Technical help, foreign assistance is all welcome, but there is a limit to everything. Ultimately we will have to depend upon our own resources. The economy is in a bad shape, but there is a possibility that with the intrinsic vitality of our people and vitality of our economic structure we can bring out this country from the muddy mire of misery and misfortune. I hope and trust that in this task we shall get the cooperation of all sections of our people. This cooperation we need from the industrialists, from the traders and also from Indians who are living abroad. They are as good patriots as we are. In this hour of crisis I want their help and support. I want to assure them that if there is any sense of instability, it is misplaced. India is on sound ground. In the near future we shall be able to bring it on par with other nations of the world which are more developed. But, for that we require hard work. For that we require a little bit of sacrifice, sacrifice by those who are in a position to make. But everything is possible only when we learn not to fight amongst ourselves. For that we need a healing touch.

Unfortunately, there is a problem in Kashmir, a problem in Punjab. Certain problems are raising their heads in Tamil Nadu and Assam. These problems are to be tackled in a spirit of reconciliation. Any path of confrontation is going to do great harm, not only to the country but also to the people who resort to this confrontationist path. I appeal to the young men, who have taken to violence, to eschew violence. If you want a solution of these problems you will have to learn the way of Mahatma Gandhi, the path of non-violence and peace. With the organised will of the people, you can change everything. I think the people will learn that death is gruesome, whether death comes because of a terrorist activity or because of police action. The Government will never like to have any police action unless and until it is coerced, or forced into that situation. I humbly appeal to all the people that they should give up violence and try to join the mainstream to contribute to the development of this country.

There is a dispute on Babri Masjid and Ramjanmabhoomi. I think that we should find out a way by reconciliation, by mutual discussion. And, religion in my opinion does not teach confrontation. Religion asks us to live like brothers. Hindu religion has always pleaded for a humane approach to all problems, compassion and sympathy for all. Any killing in the name of religion is criminal. I think the people will understand that one should eschew politics if one wants to go on the path of religion. I hope and trust that religious leaders of Muslim and Hindu communities will come to some understanding. Everybody wants that a Ram temple should be constructed in Ayodhya, but not by demolishing the mosque. This can be done only by mutual understanding; any confrontation will be disastrous not only for the immediate future but it will create a misunderstanding for all times to come. I hope and trust that soon we shall find some way out to solve this problem.

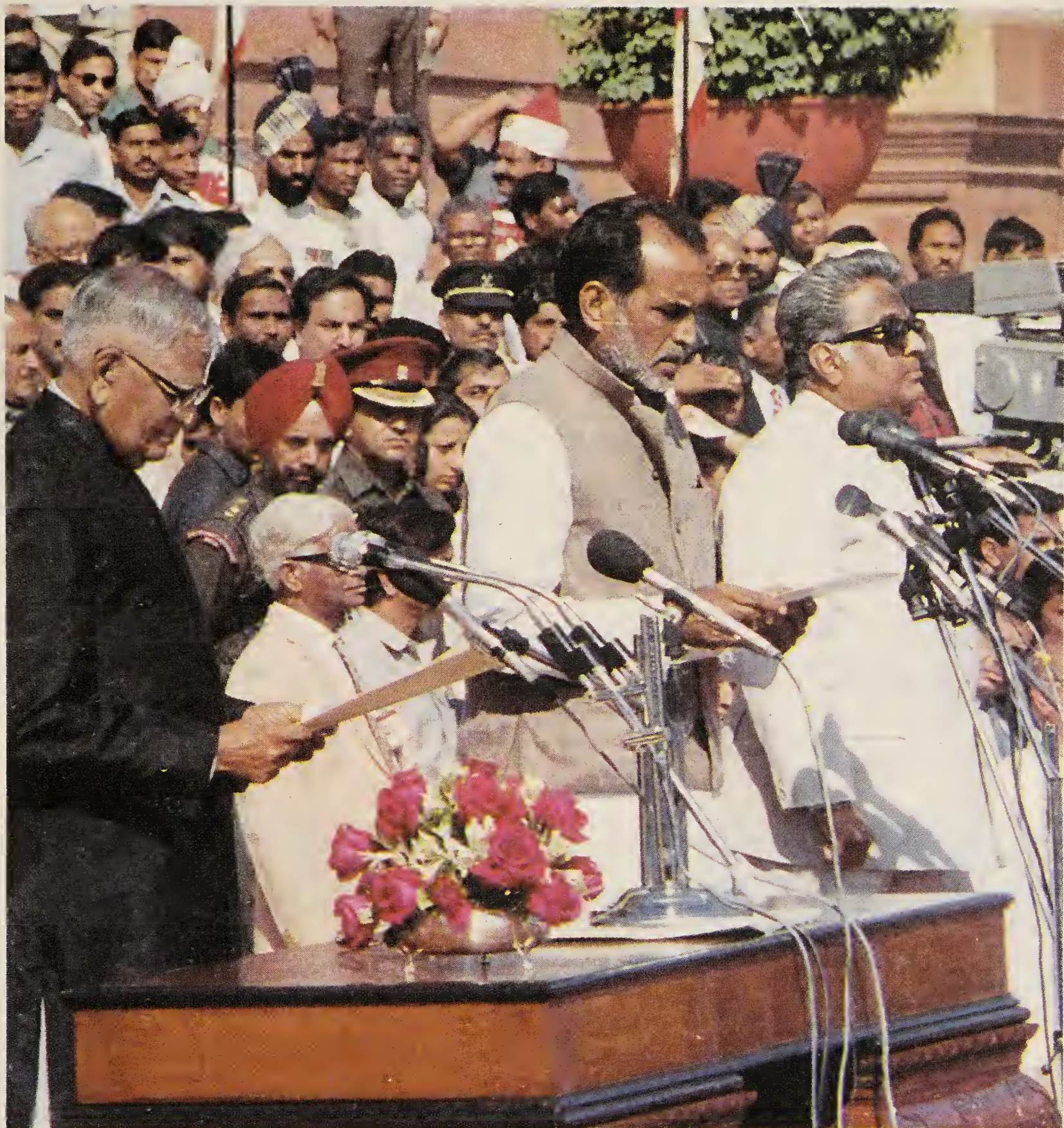
In the same way people are fighting in the name of caste on the question of reservation. Age-old system of caste has created a situation where certain backward classes are also economically backward. They have to be taken care of. Reservations on the caste lines cannot be done away with totally. But I understand and I agree that because of the lop-sided development of our economy certain people in the upper castes are also poor. Their aspirations and hopes are also to be taken into consideration. We shall have to make a synthesis and find a solution of these problems.

Also, I appeal to the people in Assam and Tamil Nadu not to resort to the path of destruction and path of terrorism. That will not lead us anywhere. I hope and trust, the people will realise that only through unity, harmony and cordiality we can solve our problems. For solving the problem of poverty, reconciliation is necessary.

As it is true of this country, so it is true of this sub-continent—it is an area of poverty. If we fight among ourselves we shall not be able to fight against poverty and squalor. And I think that while India will like to cooperate with all the nations of the world, we shall like to have the best of friendly relations with our neighbours. I hope and trust that political leaders in these areas will realize the

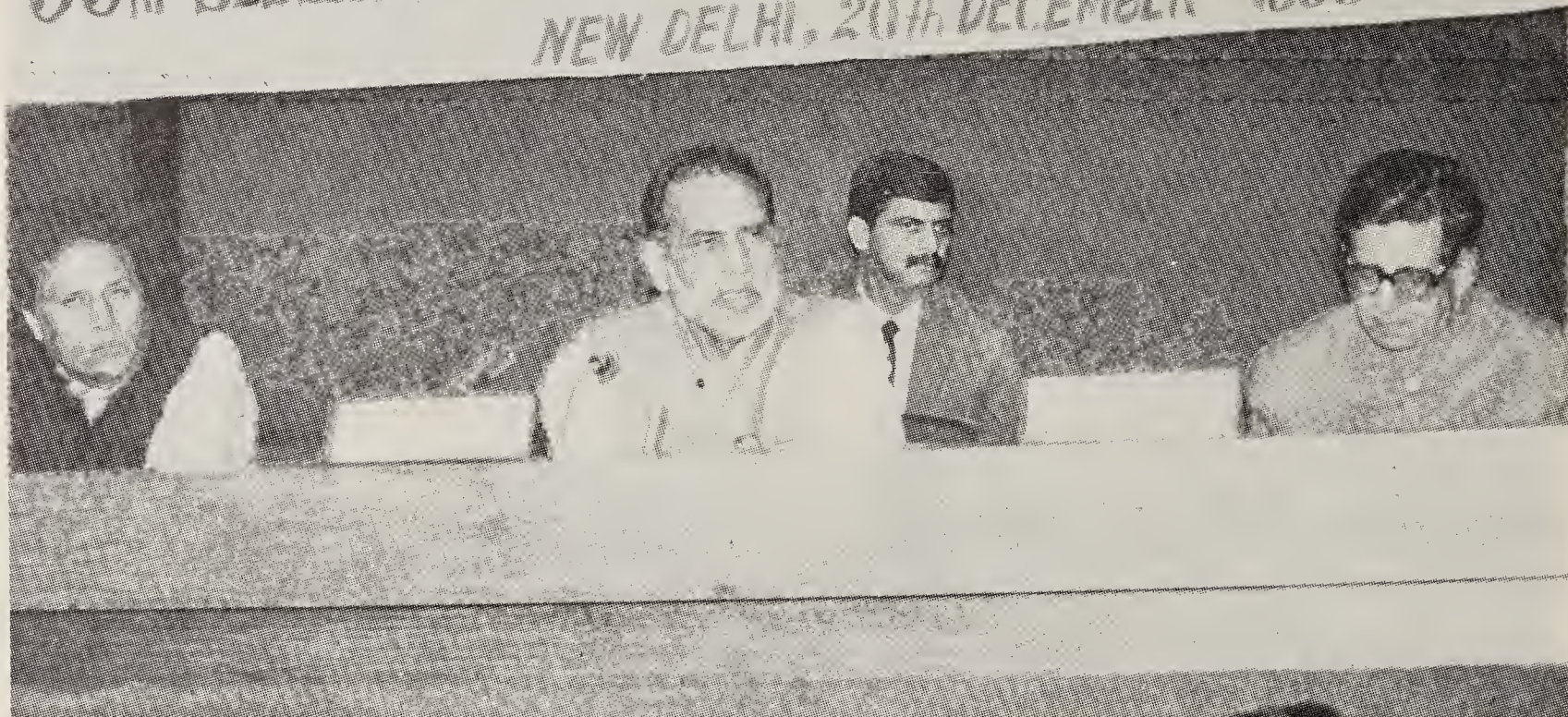
necessity of cooperation, cordiality and goodwill among the nations of this sub-continent, and with their cooperation and help we shall march together on the path of progress and prosperity towards a new world order where this sub-continent once again will show the path of world peace and amity.

I hope and trust that in this great task we shall get the cooperation of all our people. I appeal to all the political parties, all the intellectuals, all the industrialists and traders that they should contribute their mite in order to alleviate the miseries of our people. I hope that traders will cooperate with me in bringing down the prices. I am also confident that people in all spheres of life will work hard for promoting cordial relations and goodwill among our people. The age of confrontation should be changed to one of understanding, compassion and cordiality. With this hope, I have come to you to make an appeal and I hope and trust that in this great task I shall get the cooperation of all of you.

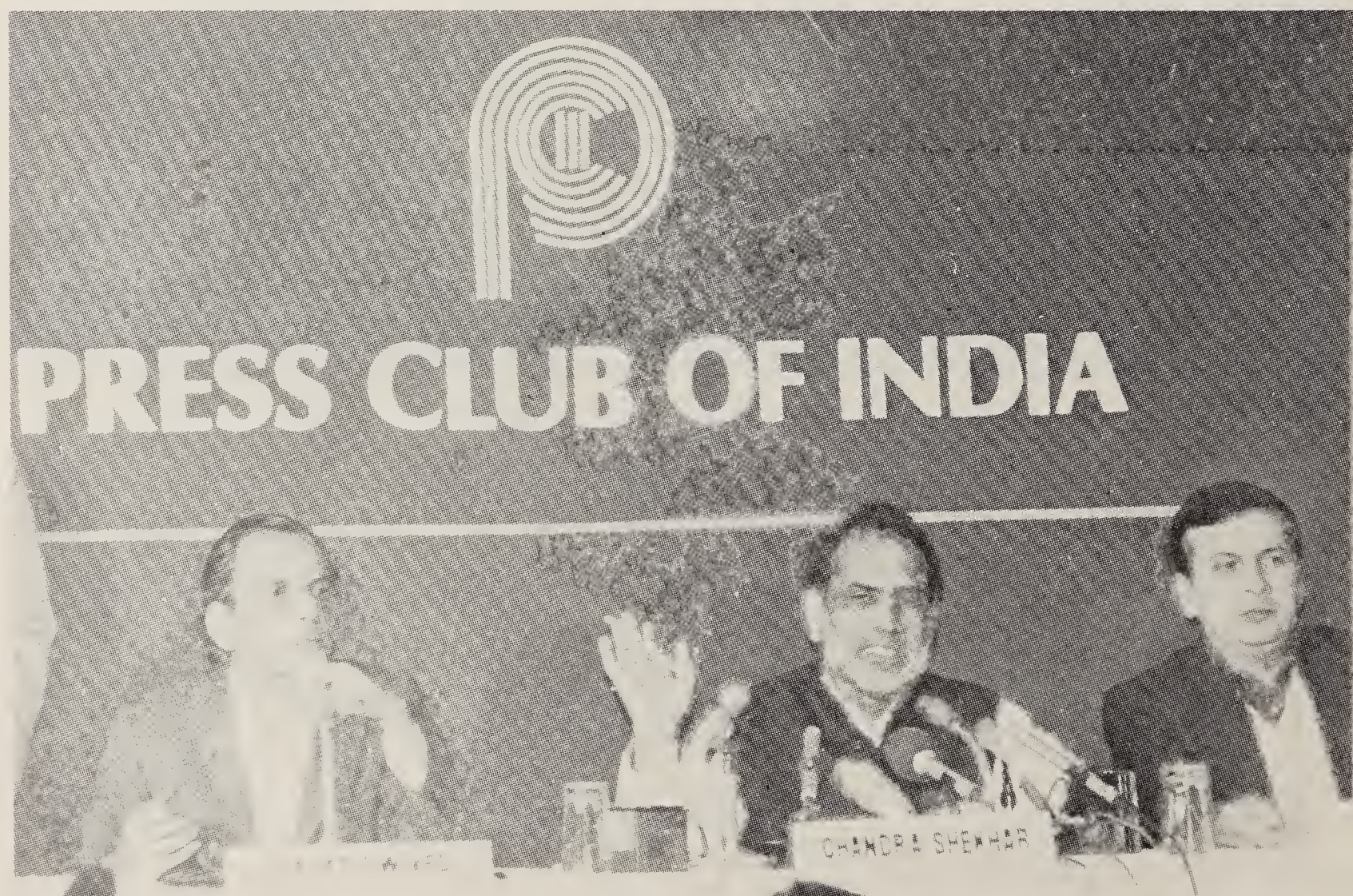


Taking the oath of office as Prime Minister, New Delhi, 10 November 1990

श्रम मंत्रियों के सम्मेलन
नई दिल्ली, 20 दिसम्बर-1990
39th SESSION OF THE LABOUR MINISTERS' CONFERENCE
NEW DELHI, 20th DECEMBER - 1990



Speaking at the 39th session of the Labour Ministers' conference, New Delhi, 20 December 1990



Addressing a press conference, Press Club of India, New Delhi, 22 December 1990



Inaugurating the 34th National Shooting Championship, New Delhi, 26 December 1990



Presenting the Bharatiya Jnanpith Award to the noted Urdu writer, Ms Qurratulain Hyder, New Delhi, 9 January 1991



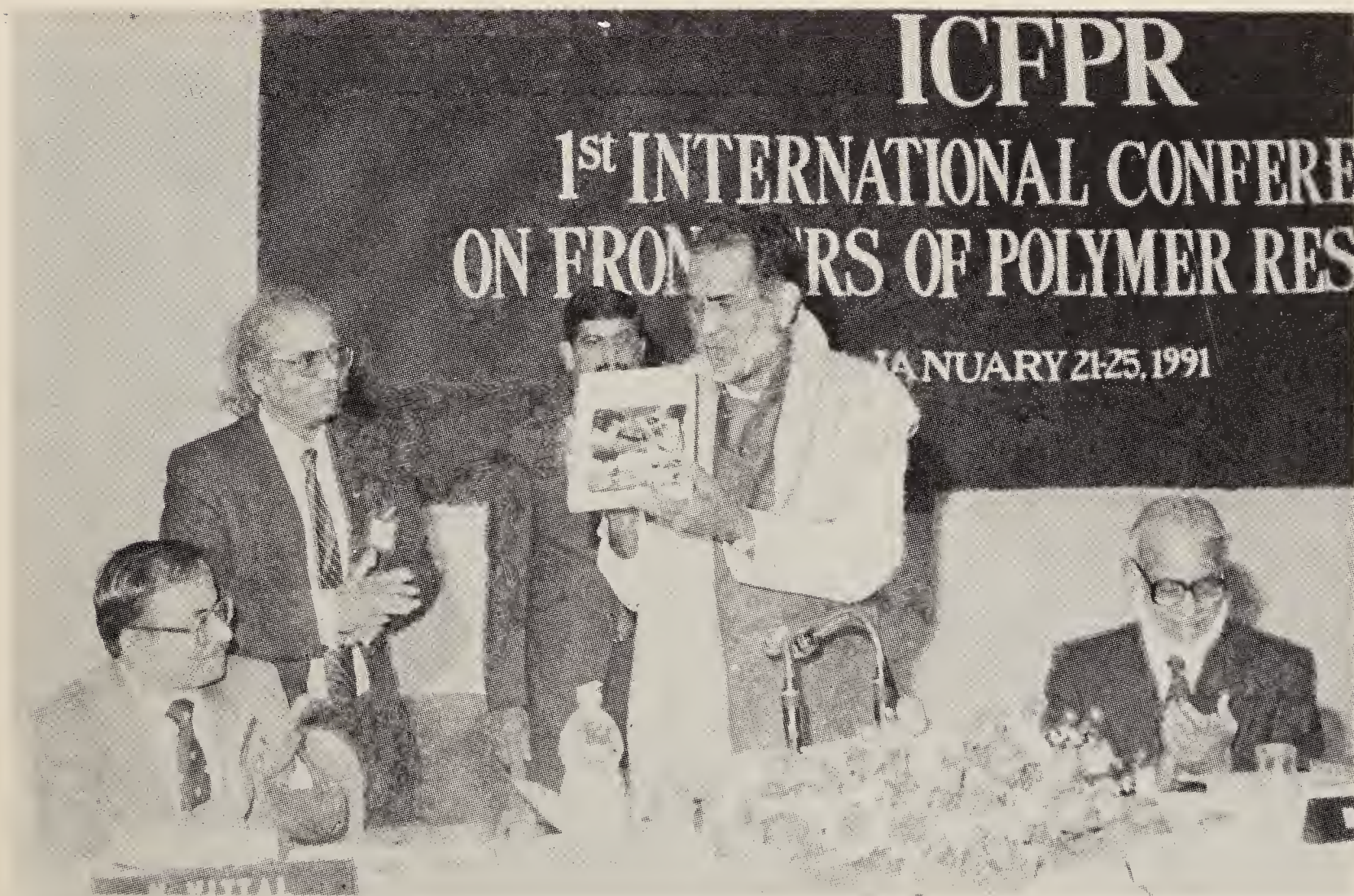
With the winners of the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Awards, New Delhi, 10 January 1991



Speaking at a function to present the National Youth Awards, New Delhi, 17 January 1991



Inaugurating the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Bangalore University, Bangalore, 18 January 1991



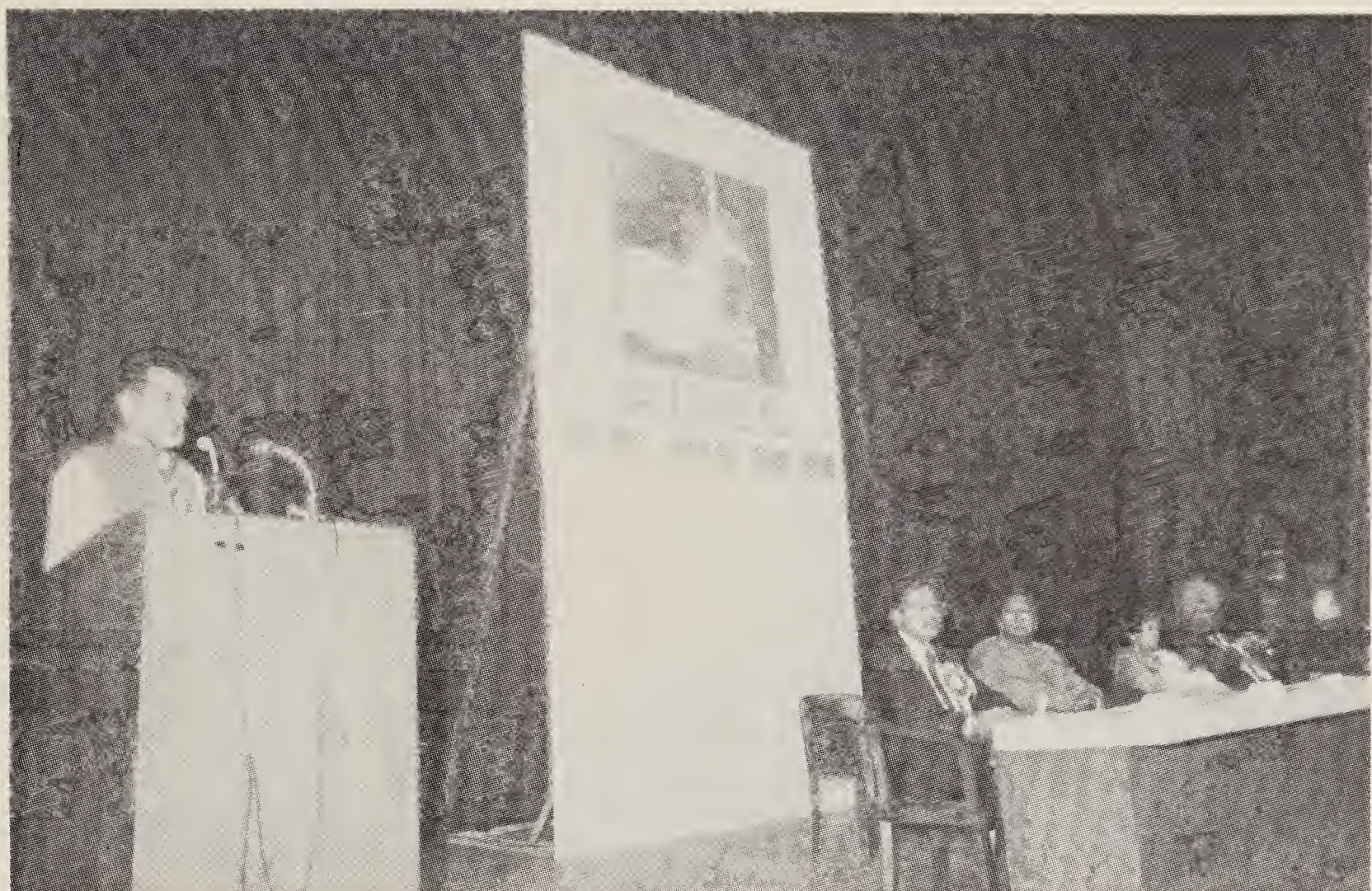
At the inaugural function of the International Conference on Frontiers of Polymer Research, New Delhi, 21 January 1991



With the winners of the National Bravery Award, New Delhi, 25 January 1991



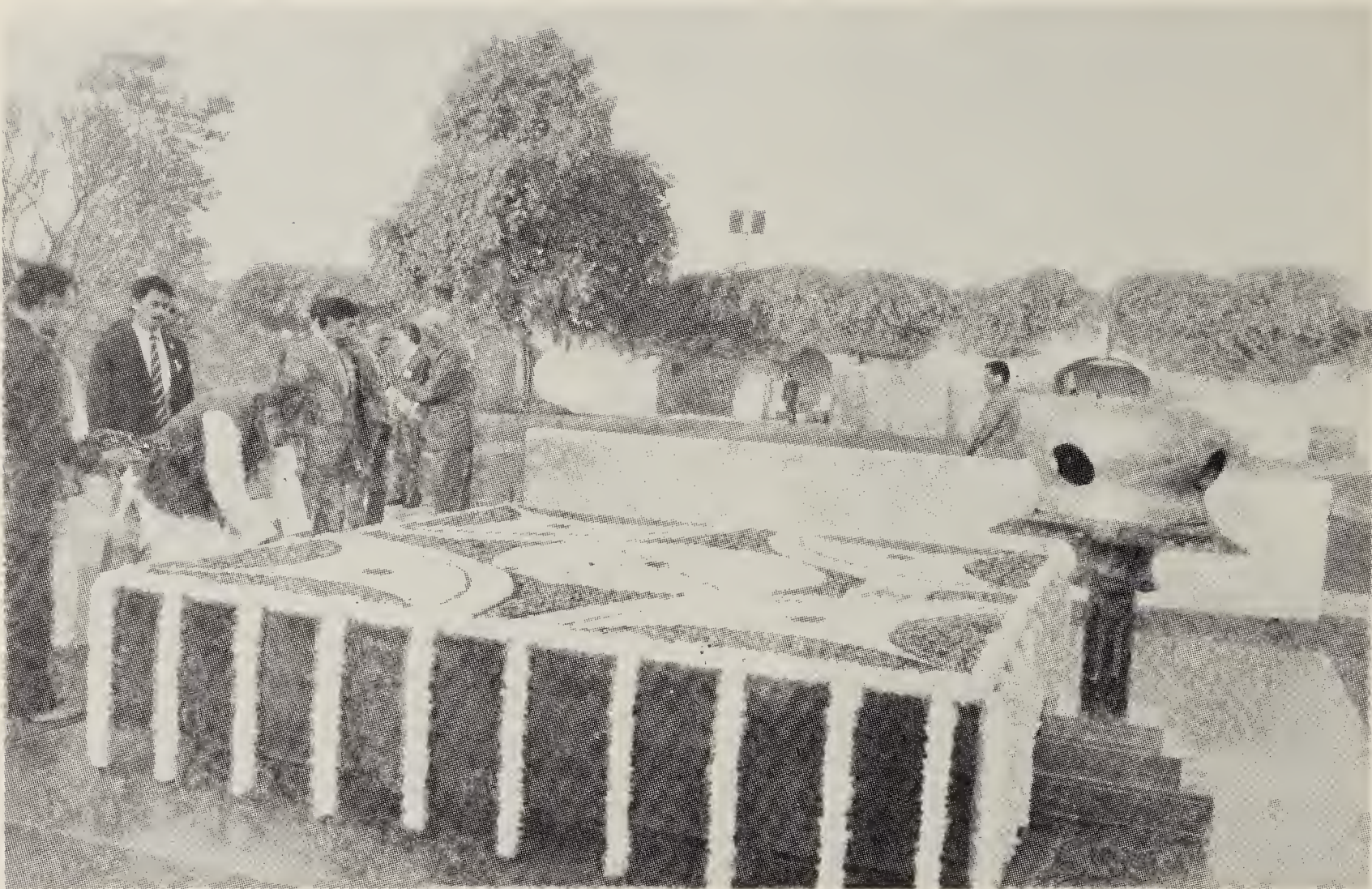
Laying a wreath at the Amar Jawan Jyoti, India Gate, New Delhi, 26 January 1991



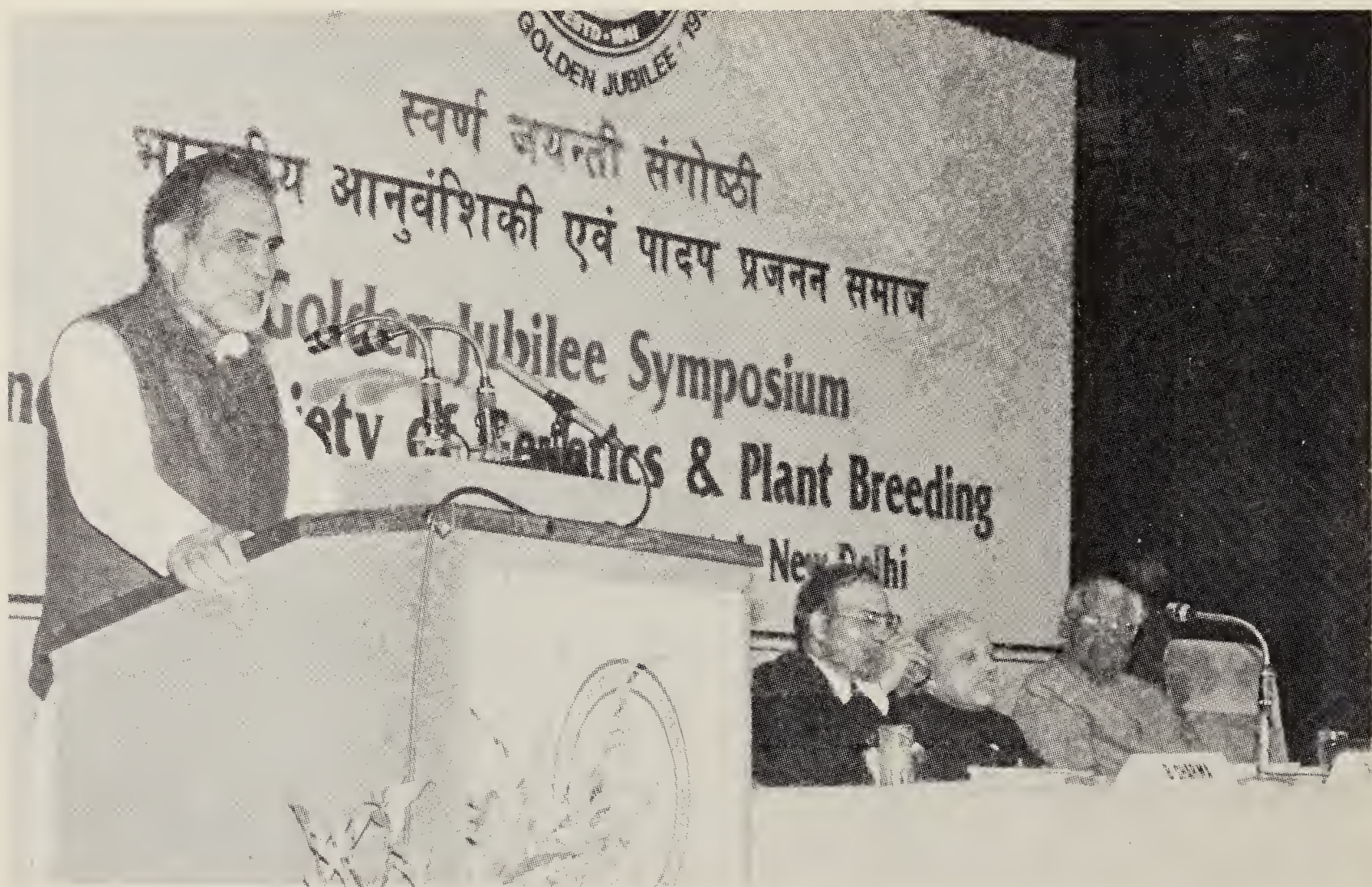
Speaking at the Golden Jubilee function of the All India Newspaper Editors' Conference, New Delhi, 29 January 1991



With the folk-dancers from Gujarat, New Delhi, 29 January 1991



Paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi, Rajghat, Delhi, 30 January 1991



Speaking at the Golden Jubilee symposium of the Indian Society of Genetic and Plant Breeding, New Delhi, 12 February 1991

From Hatred to Love

WE HAVE ASSEMBLED here in memory of Indira Gandhi. She not only administered the country for a long time but also tried to fashion its ideology in a new direction. She was a symbol of motherhood. Our lawgivers had ascribed all development to the power of the mother of which, Mrs Indira Gandhi was a glittering example. She loved everyone and especially children who are today's strength and tomorrow's hope. Whenever humanity is in despair, a child is born with the message that if there is God or any other Supreme Power, he is not disappointed with mankind and that humanity will progress towards a bright future. Indiraji had associated herself with children and she worked hard to bring happiness to them.

Our country is faced with many difficulties—poverty, hunger etc. We can overlook these problems but to overlook the children is tantamount to overlooking the future of the country. Mrs Indira Gandhi, therefore, tried to instil new vigour in the lives of children. Mr President, I am happy that organisations like UNICEF have done a lot for children not only in India but all over the world. A few days ago the world leaders commended UNESCO for its activities, especially, for the welfare of children.

Having assembled here in memory of Mrs Indira Gandhi, we also acknowledge the service rendered by UNESCO. How cruel is today's world! One who worked tirelessly to bring happiness in the lives of children and spread message of love and peace, one who endeavoured to erase the differences between man and man and between different nations, was herself a victim of violence. We must resolve that we will fight against hatred, cruelty and all those factors which drive mankind towards violence and enmity. We are one, no matter to which community, which religion we adhere to, or which part of the globe we live in. Mankind is one community. From time immemorial Indian civilization and culture has given this message:

“Small people say that this is mine and that is yours. Those who are generous regard the whole world as their family.”

Gandhiji had given the message of universal brotherhood. Jawaharlal Nehru laid its foundation and Indira Gandhi tried to put that in practice. Today smile is missing on the faces of the children and it will be our fittest tribute to Mrs Indira Gandhi if we can make unflinching commitment and endeavour to work tirelessly to bring happiness to children and to end mutual hatred.

An Ambitious Path of Economic Cooperation

I AM GRATEFUL to our gracious hosts, and particularly, to our friend President Gayoom for the warm welcome and splendid hospitality extended to us. We are meeting here in the Maldives, the abode of beauty and tranquility. I am sure that the surroundings will have a soothing effect and the outcome of our common endeavour will be constructive and more purposeful.

I am grateful to you, Mr Chairman, and to all other Heads of State and Government gathered here for the prompt response to our request to postpone this Summit by two days. This positive gesture indicates the spirit of cooperation that should prevail in our Association.

We are meeting in the Silver Jubilee Year of the Independence of Maldives. The Maldives has indeed made remarkable progress under the dynamic leadership of President Gayoom, and it is with a sense of justifiable pride that its people are celebrating its anniversary. We are happy to join the friendly people of Maldives in their rejoicing and renew our sincere good wishes for their continued progress and prosperity.

SAARC came into being despite the problems, large and small, which have existed between the member countries. While these differences impose a certain discipline on our agenda, cooperation

within the framework provided by SAARC should help to create a new climate for the resolution of these differences.

Economic cooperation among the South Asian countries has its own logic and compulsions. The framers of the SAARC Charter, therefore, displayed foresight and wisdom in not making such cooperation contingent upon the solution of bilateral problems.

I shall like to emphasise that we are an area of poverty, squalor and misery. If we fight amongst each other, if we have the politics of confrontation, we shall not be able to fight against poverty, misery and squalor of our people. So our responsibility is to our people. It is not a mere formality that we are meeting here in order to exchange pleasantries but we are concerned about the future of the people of this area and this is our responsibility.

Mr Chairman, may I make personal appeal to you, under your leadership, a new era should start. SAARC meetings should not be just exchange of formalities but we should address ourselves to the problems of the people because mere diplomatic formalities are not going to bring a new hope, a new confidence and new trust among the people of this area. This is your responsibility and I assure you on behalf of India and Indian people and the Government that we shall extend all cooperation to you in this great endeavour if the formalities are changed into real purpose for understanding the problems of people and trying to solve them.

The SAARC member countries are the poorest in the world. Almost 46 per cent of the world's poor are located in South Asia. South Asian exports constitute 0.8 per cent of the world's total. The foreign exchange reserves of South Asian countries amount to 0.7 per cent of global reserves. Most countries in the region have continuing trade and current account deficit and rising external debt and debt servicing burden. Our people have to contend with common basic needs: removal of illiteracy, eradication of disease and ensuring the survival and healthy development of children.

At the same time, the SAARC countries share formidable assets: a population of over one billion, the largest pool of skilled manpower resource in the world, good infrastructure and abundant natural resource. There is thus a second basis for economic cooperation among the SAARC member countries.

Mr Chairman, the biggest asset of mankind is manpower. We are in abundance in manpower. Nature has bestowed everything upon us and your country is a living example. Nature has given fertile land, all the mineral resources and beautiful climate. Why should we not try to exploit the nature in the service of the man? That can be done by getting the willing cooperation of our people, the toiling masses, the workers in the fields and farms and for that you have to give a new lead through this organisation, a new confidence, a new hope to the toiling masses that their labour will bring a new life to their children, a joy to their faces, it will not be exploited for the chosen few whether in their own country or outside the frontiers of their country.

Remarkable changes are taking place in the world. Competition for resources is increasing. Even the developed countries, in order to maintain their technological lead and competitive edge, are moving towards greater integration—a more unified European community. The US-Canada Common Market Agreement, the desire of the East European countries to join the West European economic mainstream and the constitution of APEC, are all pointers in this direction. This provides both a lesson and a challenge to us, since increasing regional integration elsewhere would make it even more difficult for us to compete in the markets of developed countries and against their products in other markets. Thus, the contemporary world context itself demands intensified economic cooperation among the South Asian countries.

I don't want to say that we are competing with them in a spirit of jealousy or envy. But these are the hard realities of life. These regional imbalances whether on the frontier of a country or in the world are going to create problems for the whole world. If these regional imbalances continue there can't be an enduring peace, there cannot be an understanding amongst the various nations of the world. The area in which you and I have the honour to live is the area of thousands of years of civilization and culture and we have given to the world a message of peace, of brotherhood, of non-violence; why should we not, even in future, aspire to give a new ideal to the world, that only in amity, tranquility and peace, we can prosper and humanity can have a better future.

The nature of cooperation among the SAARC countries that exists today is modest and limited. Through our ongoing activities, we have certainly benefited from each other's experiences and have become aware of each other's needs and potential. Some of the spectacular events organised have, indeed, helped in projecting the SAARC personality. However, there seems to be no direct impact of SAARC activities on the lives of the peoples of our countries. The low level of day-to-day interaction between our peoples persists. Indeed, in some areas we seem to be regressing. From 1980 to 1987 intra-SAARC exports and imports, as a percentage of SAARC global trade, fell from 4.94 per cent to 2.98 per cent and from 2.29 per cent to 1.39 per cent, respectively.

Our limited technical and infrastructural cooperation has not made a dent in meeting the day-to-day needs and aspirations of our peoples. We are still faced with the anomalous situation where freight rates between Calcutta and Khulna or between Karachi and Bombay are higher than the rates between Calcutta and Singapore or between Karachi and Hong Kong. May I know why can't we correct it? May I request the President of Bangladesh and the Prime Minister of Pakistan? These are the areas where we can do something in order to bring about better understanding and intimate cooperation to change the situation in this area. These are the hard realities of life. For that, we don't require anything big, but just we have to sit together.

I am not revealing any secret. Just now, His Excellency, the President of Bangladesh told me that most of the time SAARC meetings and summits were mere formalities. Why should we not try to take up the issues that are agitating the minds of the people in this area and try to find some solutions. May I request you, as the Chairman, as the leader of the SAARC for the coming year, to introduce a new method of functioning, a new modality in dealing with the problems of this area and also organising these summits.

A genuine impact can only be made if we cooperate in the area of production of goods and services and their exchange, which really means cooperation in trade, industry, energy, money and finance. This has been the fundamental basis of regional economic cooperation all over the world. Only those regional groupings have

succeeded which have incorporated these areas of cooperation as an integral part of their activity and made progress in them.

It was understandable that in the beginning our emphasis was to undertake those activities that were designed to create confidence. But a stage has now come to launch SAARC on a more ambitious path of economic cooperation. These would open new and dynamic opportunities. Should we not do so, we may be failing in our duty to set the pace for a more rapid socio-economic transformation in this region.

Cooperation among countries of the region should be forged in a manner that serves the best interests of all the countries involved. The precise way in which we achieve this will be a test of our organisational capacity.

We are living in times of rapid technological progress. It is appropriate that SAARC should explore new areas of cooperation in high technology. With the onset of biotechnology revolution, genetic resources are becoming high-premium, crucial developmental resources. Access to genetic resources is essential for agricultural research and plant-breeding programmes. They are thus vital for the long-term food security of developing countries. These resources are also extremely important for medicinal purposes. Unfortunately, the genetic resources available in developing countries, including the South Asian countries, are threatened by extinction or piracy. Immediate action is, therefore, needed to conserve genetic resources for future development.

We propose cooperation among SAARC countries in this important area. Specifically, we propose an exchange of expertise in genetic conservation and maintenance of germplasm banks. We are prepared to offer our own training facilities in this area. We also propose cooperation in cataloguing of genetic resources stored and available in different SAARC countries, with a view to facilitate their exchange. The Group of 15 developing countries has proposed the establishment of a gene bank for developing countries. I would like to invite other SAARC countries to participate in this venture as soon as it is established.

Another step that can open promising avenues for future

cooperation could be the setting up of a Fund for regional projects. The Fund could make available credit on easy terms for the identification and development of projects and even for investment in the starting of projects in the small scale sector. We could ask the senior representatives of our national development banks to get together and consider making institutional funding available for this purpose. The precise modalities about the source of funds and the manner in which these could be related to joint venture projects could be worked out at the expert level.

I emphasise this point because nobody is going to bail us out from our difficulties. If you have to have greater progress, greater adventure in order to make this region a region of prosperity and progress, we shall have to stand on our own and whatever little resources are at our command, we should try to pool them together in order to bring something. That will be the beginning of a new trust, a new confidence. Let us forget our differences, let us start afresh, not for solving our present problems but for a brighter future for the coming generation. It is the call of the history and if we fail in this, we shall not be failing in our present duties, but we will be failing in our responsibility for creating a brighter future for the coming generations of this area, the area which has been the area of glory for years, for centuries all together.

SAARC had created a regional food security reserve. However, no member country has so far utilized this reserve. We need to review the level and quality of the food reserve and its mode of operation, and introduce such changes as may be necessary to meet the needs of the member countries.

We have fallen a year behind in completing the studies that we had mandated at the Kathmandu Summit, on cooperation in the fields of trade and industry and for the prevention of environmental degradation. Problems related with environmental degradation deserve immediate attention and corrective measures should be taken promptly. These studies should be completed without further delay and blue-print for regional cooperation based on them drawn up well before the half-yearly meeting of the Council of Ministers. The blue-print can be adopted at the next SAARC Summit.

This decision was taken in Kathmandu and, the Prime Minister of Nepal is here. Environmental problems of Nepal affect us in a big way. So, may I request through you, the Prime Minister of Nepal that he should devote his energy, more in saving the environment there. It is not an advice but it is the help that I am seeking from him because on Nepal's environment depends to a great extent the environment of India.

We had long decided that regular consultations among the SAARC member countries should take place at the Ministerial level in order to develop common perceptions and strategy on international economic and environmental issues. In the context of the rapidly changing world economic situation, the need for such consultations has become all the more necessary. We hope that the next in the series of these consultations would take place soon after this Summit. We are glad that our offer to host the Ministerial level meeting for the purpose has been accepted.

The journey that we began five years ago had aroused much expectations. The need for regional cooperation has since become all the more imperative and the opportunities for such cooperation are much more varied. It is my fervent hope that we will not lose this opportunity to impart momentum to our cooperation under SAARC.

I know that we have many problems but we have many assets too. We have thousands of years of cultural heritage, a heritage that keeps us binding. It has not been so far disturbed because of difference of religious beliefs. It has not been disturbed by the barriers of language. Our people have remained for centuries with glory and, I hope the present may be howsoever difficult, future is hopeful for us.

Let us move forward with optimism, trust and confidence in each other and also in the inherent strength of our people because that is going to determine the future of this area and also of the world.

Defending the Motherland

ON COMING HERE I really got the true idea of our strength. The high standard of the parade by the Border Security Force gives us the assurance that India's future is safe. The performance of today inspire confidence in the manhood and valour of our *jawans*. Your organisation stands for India's unity. The *jawans* who have come from different corners of the country not only stake their lives for the defence of India but also campaign for building a new India. I bow my head in memory of those who have sacrificed their lives for the defence of the country. Though they are no longer amidst us today, they inspire our countrymen to sacrifice their lives for the sake of the motherland. I congratulate those *jawans* and officers who have won medals for their courage and organising ability. I know under what adverse conditions you are working. A large number of your officers and *jawans* are killed and wounded. But this has not demoralised you. On the contrary you are doing your best with renewed confidence to defend the country and maintain peace.

The *jawans* of the Border Security Force have not only demonstrated their courage everywhere whether it is Punjab, Kashmir or Assam but have also spread the message of goodwill, affection and brotherhood. We want peace everywhere. We do not

want our *jawans* to face bullets. At the same time no one should be under the illusion that they could subvert the political authority or tarnish the reputation of the country on the strength of bullets.

Besides defending the borders and preserving the unity of the country, the officers and *jawans* of the Border Security Force participate in sports which the country need to promote—whether it is mountaineering or other sports and have done very well. You go to the remote corners of the country to provide succour to the people, be it natural calamity such as floods and droughts or law and order problem such as riots.

My best wishes are with you. I can assure you that your sacrifice will not go in vain. Unity of India will be preserved. She will regain her lost glory. We are passing through a difficult period, but our future is bright. We will make tomorrow's India with your help. You are today's strength and tomorrow's hope.

Justice for the Downtrodden

I FEEL HONoured to be amidst you to pay homage to Baba Saheb Ambedkar. About two thousand years ago Mahatma Buddha gave us the message of *Bahujan Hitaya, Bahujan Sukhaya* which means, the happiness of the many lies in striving for the welfare of the majority. After Independence Baba Saheb gave us the Constitution to put that message in practice. He gave us an idea of a new society, in which mankind would be relieved of sufferings especially those segments which are exploited, under-privileged and downtrodden. It is a matter of great disgrace that those members of the society who work hard to produce food for us are scorned by the society.

There can be nothing more humiliating than according such treatment to a useful section of the society. To do them justice, Mahatma Gandhi had said that we must respect labour. The society must give respect to those who do the manual work. But the tragedy is that we have not allowed them their rights, leave aside respect. We must resolve that those who do manual work would be accorded the highest place in the society for they are the wealth of the country. The factories and safe deposit vaults are not our wealth; our wealth is the hard working men. Today they are unhappy. They do not have the assurance that their children will have the benefit of the wealth they produce. Our society and the

government should resolve that the wealth produced by the toil of these men will not be squandered for the pleasure of a few, but will be utilized to bring joy in the lives of the poor children. I think the greatest tribute to Baba Saheb Ambedkar whose centenary we are celebrating next year is to work for and accomplish his dream.

I am happy to know that a committee has been formed to prepare for the centenary celebrations of Baba Saheb. I want to assure all the members of the committee that on the basis of the report submitted by them the centenary would be celebrated on a scale befitting Baba Saheb.

Baba Saheb is a symbol of our concern for human values. Though born in a society which was backward and downtrodden, he taught us that there is no upper caste or lower caste. But the society which is intellectually alive and determined could lead the nation. We have to put this vision in practice. I assure you that the government will try to implement all the proposals submitted by the Centenary Celebration Committee. But bear in mind that the most important thing is to win the confidence of the people. We cannot form a new society if the people have no confidence in us. Our backward classes are frustrated and our intellectuals lack faith in us. Therefore it is the duty of all of us to resolve that henceforth no backward person, no poor, no *dalit*, no intellectual would need to fear us. We will try to remove all the apprehensions they have. We have to help all those people who are downtrodden and are being exploited. I would also like to remind our brethren of what Gandhiji had said, "Eschew fear. Then there is no power on earth which can dominate you."

My friend Sumanji just asked you to give me some time to consider your problems. I do not want any time. I have no grudge against those who are angry with me. Every person has a right to protest, every person has a right to show his anger. By all means you have a right to be angry but not with the individuals. Be angry with the society which is responsible for your exploitation, which teaches one to hate the other, which prevents you to claim equality with others.

I have faith in the youth, especially those belonging to the weaker sections that they will certainly strive to get rid of the

exploitative society. I can only say one thing in memory of Baba Saheb Ambedkar. My Government is fully committed in rendering full cooperation to you in your struggle for establishing an egalitarian society and bringing in a new era in the country.

Let us march forward with faith and confidence. There would be an atmosphere of confidence amongst the people during the centenary celebration of Baba Saheb Ambedkar next year. But remember what Mahatma Buddha had said—"for the benefit of many, for the happiness of many". He did not say "for the benefit of all, for the happiness of all". Some persons might be unhappy with our policies, some might be even angry with us but it is not the responsibility of our government to keep everyone in good humour. Our responsibility is to keep that big section of the society happy—which produces wealth for the country by the sweat of their brow and they should have the pride of place in our society.

If we want to kindle a lamp of hope in the huts, we will have to dim the dazzling lights of the palaces. There are people who will resent this, they feel that everything is slipping out of their hands. But you should not get unnerved, if you do not want to snatch the strength of others, no one will touch your wealth. But if your wealth survives on the helplessness of others then we are determined to do away with the gap between that wealth and helplessness. That was the message given to us by Mahatma Gandhi and the same message was incorporated in the Constitution by Baba Saheb Ambedkar.

With this resolve and with faith in your strength, I bow my head in memory of Baba Saheb Ambedkar.

Keeping Alive the Tradition

I HAVE THE honour today to attend the 51st annual parade of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). The *jawans* of CRPF have made immense sacrifices to maintain the honour and dignity of the country during the last fifty-one years. I do not know how many deeds of bravery, how many sacrifices by the Central Reserve Police Force the country has witnessed in the last fifty-one years. The country will ever remain indebted to the officers and *jawans* who have sacrificed their lives. We can offer to their families nothing but sympathy. The medals and citations given posthumously to them signify that the grateful nation would always remember them with respect and pride. They have inspired us, they have given us strength for building a future India and we will go ahead on the path shown by them.

History will always remember those who have sacrificed their lives to safeguard our freedom, dignity, sovereignty and integrity. I bow my head in respect of those martyrs. At the same time I congratulate the officers and *jawans* of the Central Reserve Police Force for keeping alive the honourable tradition. You have in the last fifty-one years exemplified yourself by your strength, courage and self-restraint. You have also tried to prove and you have succeeded in your endeavours that the ancient tradition of revering

women, in this country, still persists. I congratulate those young women who by their capability, valour, daring and hard work have created new traditions.

For thousands of years our women had been in the forefront in every field. But it is our misfortune that in course of time some bad customs crept into our society leading to the ill-treatment of women. The credit for restoring that status to women goes to the young women of Central Reserve Police Force. They have proved that women not only have affection and love for others but they also have courage, strength and patience. Whenever there was injustice, exploitation, harassment and victimization of innocents, Goddess Durga, a symbol of women's strength came forward to punish the guilty.

I am happy to know that you are unrivalled in bravery, spirit of adventure and sacrifice. You have also realized the need for building a new society. There is not only a Central School here, but you too have your own school. The smiling faces of these boys and girls give us the hope that tomorrow's India will be a happy India. Your efforts for improving the condition of these children are praiseworthy. You are the symbol of India's unity.

The boys and girls of the Central Reserve Police Force are drawn from all over India. They have dedicated their lives to the service of the country. We have to follow their example. Today there is hatred, bitterness and tension in the society but your fellow-feeling, cooperation and your well co-ordinated working be it on the play grounds or on the battlefields, give us the confidence that our country is safe in your hands. Your example will inspire the people to work hard, and instil confidence among women and children.

I congratulate the young men who have been awarded prizes for bravery. The country looks up to them with respect. I am sure in future they will achieve more success.

Labour is Strength

THE BIGGEST ASSET of our nation is manpower, not industry, not wealth. It is manpower that matters in a country like India. The 850 million people of this country can do wonders provided we are able to motivate them. This will-power cannot come till we give them confidence and trust about their future. The toiling masses should have the confidence that whatever they generate in the form of wealth will not be used for the pleasure of a chosen few but for building a new future for their children. Whatever wealth we have is not because of the miracle of the scientists or the managing capacity of the industrialists but because of the hard work of the toiling masses in fields and factories. This is the only way to create wealth. Nature has bestowed on us natural resources and whenever human beings make use of them, wealth is created for the benefit of mankind. But it is unfortunate that all over the world, and more so in our society, those who create wealth are not allowed to get its benefits.

The toiling masses, the poorer sections of society remain exploited and are oppressed even today. This has been the cause of social tensions in many areas. Poverty itself is a curse; but poverty also becomes an irritating factor, because people can tolerate absolute poverty but not relative poverty. Those who work hard do

not get the basic minimum needs of their life and those who do not work get all the benefits of society. Hence, there are growing social tensions in society. If we see the tribal belts of India from Tripura to Tamil Nadu, there is unrest everywhere.

We have to decide whether we are going to deal with these problems with understanding, compassion and sympathy and change our policies to suit the urges and aspirations of these toiling masses, or are we going to silence them by using the coercive power of the state? So far, the tendency has been to use the coercive power of the state to silence the demands of the toiling masses ruthlessly. In a democratic society this is a counter productive measure. And, if I can say so, it is a self-defeating attitude which sometimes even proves to be suicidal.

Societies which do not change themselves, which do not remain in tune with the wishes and urges of the toiling masses, ultimately get destroyed. Societies are not changed by changes in the Constitution. Societies are not changed through laws of Parliament. Societies sometimes change when those people who are the arbiters of the destiny of the poorer sections do not respond to their urges. That is why I said in the very beginning that you are dealing with a very vital sector of this country. Vital, because labour is the strength of today and hope of tomorrow. Not only that, they are also becoming more conscious every day. Awareness is coming to them whether we like it or not. It is not because of the trade unions alone; the utterances, expressions, and the high slogans given by the governments too have made them aware. Everytime during elections, ministers and leaders of political parties go and tell them that they are going to determine the future of this country. So, they become conscious and aware of their inner strength and try to assert themselves.

I would like to urge all of you, ministers and officers dealing with labour problems, that you should understand the social dynamics that are operating in this country. A change is taking place, without the effort of the politicians, and irrespective of the labour laws that are in operation in the country. So, we have to be very careful in dealing with labour problems. I shall not go into the details of the issues that you are going to deal with. However, I would like to

pinpoint certain problems that we are facing in this country. My friend, Shri Ramji Lal Suman, talked about child labour. He talked about voluntary agencies. I hear speeches from every quarter that child labour is a curse on this country. Even the Labour Organisations all over the world and UN Organisations have made it clear that child labour should be abolished not only in India but all over the world. But what is the reality in our country? The reality is that in many families, living in remote villages, jungles and other places, a seven or eight year old child, whether a boy or a girl, is forced to do some type of labour. Children are also engaged in work within the family at the cost of their education, recreation, etc. This is as bad as child labour employed by outsiders. If we are not able to create conditions where every child can be sent to school, where necessary primary schooling can be provided to the children, then just making labour laws stipulating that child labour is illegal is not going to help. No one will go to a labour court to say that my child is employed or is going to the jungle to graze the cattle. So labour laws should also take into consideration the overall development of society. If child labour is to be taken care of, society should take the responsibility for providing necessary calories, elementary education and primary health services. If these minimum things are not assured, any legislation on child labour is going to be futile.

Take the case of agricultural child labour. We have been talking about agricultural labour and have been asserting time and again that they should be given minimum wages. I also know that in many states, several labour laws such as the Minimum Wages Act are in force. But what is the real situation there? People who employ these agricultural labour do not have the paying capacity. Unless and until agriculturists are helped to be in a position where they have the capacity to pay more wages to labour, I think any legislation will just be for the satisfaction of the people sitting in Parliament or occupying high positions as labour ministers in a state or a labour minister in Government of India. The overall economy has to be improved. And for this, as I said in the beginning, if the society has scarce resources, these scarce resources should be invested in areas where basic minimum needs programmes are taken care of.

Unfortunately our priorities have been wrong in many ways. India is not poor. We have got mineral wealth; we have got fertile land; we have got manpower. There is no reason why we should remain poor. Only 200 or 250 years back, India was one of the richest countries in the world but now it has become one of the poorest countries because the balance between manpower and natural resources was disturbed by the colonial powers. They were not concerned about the aspirations, and the urges of the people. They did not try to generate the will-power. The responsibility is now upon you. We have to create necessary conditions where will-power is generated.

What has happened? The organised labour gets everything it wants. All the laws mainly benefit the organized labour. I may be excused to say that many sections of the organized labour have become totally irresponsible. They have become just an instrument of coercing the society to get more for themselves without caring for the poorer and the neglected sections of the society. I would again like to emphasise that the richer and privileged sections of the society must make sacrifices. Sacrifices will have to be made by everybody if the neglected sections of the society are to be taken care of. But this should begin from the top. This should begin from the more privileged sections of the society. This is a very hard decision. Hard decisions are not to be taken only by the Labour Minister or the Labour Department of the Government of India or various state governments. These hard decisions, hard options are to be taken by the Government of India and by the society as a whole. What policies do we want to make? What are our priorities? Are our priorities for the most vocal sections of the society, or should we care for the silent millions who cannot articulate their claims? This is the challenge before the Labour Department and the Labour Ministry and I hope and trust that all of you who are here are conscious of your responsibilities.

There are many impediments and many difficulties. I hope and trust that this conference will, before going into the implementation of the recommendations of the Bachawat and the Ramanujam Committees and other Acts promulgated by Parliament, consider these basic points. What should be our basic attitude towards labour problems? How should we utilize the manpower that we have got?

Sometime back we gave the slogan of 'right to work', but that is not a mere slogan. 'Right to work' is a privilege and if we want to give this right we have to adopt the old slogan given by Mahatma Gandhi, that we have to be self-reliant. We have to adopt it seriously. If the country is poor we shall have to be satisfied with what we can produce in our country by using our natural resources and by employing our labour power. But, unfortunately, though we talk of the heritage of Mahatma Gandhi we have taken nothing from his ideas in our developmental programmes. This is another aspect which we should try to emphasise. If we are to rely upon our own resources then austerity will not remain just a slogan. Austerity will have to be implemented vigorously and on all sides. Sometimes we are also forced to introduce austerity measures. India is in a situation where austerity has become imperative. Whether you like it or not, all departments of Government have no other option but to go in for an austerity drive, and it should not be only by compulsion. It should be a voluntary behaviour of those who are the arbiters of the destiny of this country. Unfortunately, this has not happened so far.

Can you make a new beginning now? The initiative should come from your friends who are in charge of labour, who are in charge of the future of the society; because upon your thinking, upon your attitude, depends the future of this nation. No country in the world, not even all the nations of the world together, can bail us out from our present difficulties. The only option is that we should try to generate the will-power of our country, of our people. Only the willing cooperation of our labour force, whether they are working in a factory, or in the fields is going to save the future of this country. I hope and trust that all of you who are responsible persons in your field and all the labour leaders and the leaders of society, and all the officials who are dealing with this vital sector, will understand the call of the time. I do not want to exaggerate your importance but I do want to impress upon you that you should never think that you have come here only for the ceremonial inauguration of this Labour Conference. You have come here to understand the problems. If you do not understand the basic problems of this country, you are not only failing in your duty of discharging your responsibility to the nation but you and I together

will be held responsible for ruining the country. There is no use in blaming the past. No use in weeping or crying over the past. Let us look forward to the future. The future can be built only by understanding the present situation. If we are not ready to make an objective assessment of today, we are not going to have any initiative for the future. So, I request all of you that while going through the Conference papers, please keep in mind the basic problems. Devote some time on them and let us try not to hoodwink the people any more. Amidst all this tall talk of right to work, abolition of child labour and giving of minimum wages to the agriculturists, we should spend some time and tell the people frankly where we stand.

There is no use giving false hopes. We can create optimism by addressing ourselves to the real problems, not by making promises which you and I know we cannot fulfil. Try to take the people into confidence, especially the labour force. I am confident that if this changed attitude emerges from this Conference it will have its effect on the whole thinking of the Government, and on all the policy-making organisations. I assure you, friends, that with your cooperation and support, we shall begin a new chapter in the history of this country. This chapter should begin from this vital sector of the society, and as I said earlier, you are dealing with the most vital asset of the nation.

I salute all of you and I hope that you will discharge your duty and come up to the expectations of the people of this country.

Achievements of Scientists

I AM HAPPY that I have the opportunity of meeting our scientists, intellectuals and scholars along with the industrialists. We are privileged to have amidst us, our countrymen who live abroad. The generosity shown by the Finance Minister during the last one and a half months has made me happy. Whatever knowledge I have gained about your work is quite encouraging, and I feel, that you deserve praise for your work, which has kindled a new hope for the future of the country.

You have endeavoured to enter a field which was unexplored so far. It is true that science gives us life, it gives us knowledge. It not only takes us on to the road to development, it also takes us on the road to destruction. In your field, the scope for progress is unlimited but the scope for destruction is limited. Just as our friend Mr Menon had rightly pointed out a little while ago, biotechnology is that field of science which has unlimited potentialities to lead us to progress and also bears less possibilities for destruction. However, we should not feel very assured about the latter. I say that because science will definitely one day upset the natural equilibrium. I do not know where you will take the society then. But today your achievements have kindled hope in every child for a new life. In a country like India, population is growing fast. We would not be

able to bear the burden of our growing population unless you give them the confidence that your researches will protect every child from malnutrition and disease.

It is a matter of great shame and concern that in spite of our progress, we are not able to protect our children from hunger and blindness. Malnutrition of our children is our big problem. Your contribution to agriculture will no doubt increase food production. That gives us the hope that in the coming years, no child will suffer from hunger, no one will die because of want of medicines and no parents will wish for more children because those born will be healthy and live long.

I am confident that the achievement of scientists in the field of education will take us to that destination which has been our dream for a long time and which we could not realise, despite our best efforts.

India should be, and is in fact proud of, what our scientists have achieved. It is true that our scientists have many achievements to their credit individually and have earned much fame world-wide. We feel honoured for that. But now that they intend to do something for their country through this consortium, is something of which we should all be proud.

I hope that our friends who have settled abroad, but who still love this country, and are in a position to provide assistance, will render us help. I trust that they will carry our message to those countrymen who are away from India so that they too have faith in us.

I do believe that a very distorted picture of India is being portrayed abroad and we are partly responsible for that. Some of us say that our economy is tottering, the country is breaking up and there is tension in society, but this is only a one sided picture, portrayed by those who have lost self-confidence.

India is not only a large country. It has a manpower of eighty-five crore. Our manpower is our greatest strength. If the will-power of the crores of our people is applied to our minerals and to our fertile land, our country can achieve significant progress. Besides this, we will have an additional support if we get help from new

scientific developments. That will create confidence in the people. It will strengthen our will-power and we will march forward with renewed vigour and zest.

I congratulate our financial institutions for their contribution to this Institute. I hope that our industrialists will show more generosity than the Finance Minister and will contribute more to this Institution. I have noticed in the papers shown to me that their contribution is not enough. Though we have many problems and limitations, I would request the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission to bear in mind that our Government is not incapable of meeting the requirements necessary for promoting science and helping the scientists. We have to give first priority to science even if it means depriving the other sections. We have to do everything for promotion of science.

About 250 years ago our country was one of the richest countries in the world. We have been reduced to our present poor state, because of two reasons; first we ill-treated those who could have helped the society to prosper, and second, we could not disseminate knowledge and learning among the masses. Learning and knowledge remained confined to a few schools, it could not reach the villages. I congratulate the Institutions and the scientists associated with it for their commendable effort to take learning from the schools to the lanes and bylanes of the villages and wish them success. I do believe that with your cooperation we will be able to begin a new chapter in our history. Every scientist deserves our respect and our cooperation and the Government will do the best and go ahead to accord the rightful place to a scientist which he deserves.

Religion: an Instrument for Serving Humanity

TODAY IS GURU Gobind Singh's birth anniversary. He was one of those greatmen who gave courage to our people when they had fallen on bad days. As the speakers who preceded me have said, Guru Gobind Singh had made a great sacrifice for upholding the values and dignity of our countrymen. Those were the golden days of our history when people sacrificed their lives in defence of their fellow men. Guru Gobind Singh told his father that he himself should set an example of sacrifice before exhorting others to do so. And in this very Delhi his father gave his life for defending the religious sentiments of Kashmiri Brahmins. Guru Gobind Singh sacrificed his young sons to uphold his dignity and his moral values. Such sacrifice is unparalleled in the history of the world. Such was our glorious tradition and history. We shared each others sorrows. By quirk of fate the circumstances have become entirely different now. Brothers are after each others blood. We have to change this atmosphere and for doing so, the example set by Guru Gobind Singh will provide us strength and inspiration. Just as Guru Gobind Singh sacrificed his sons for the sake of his religion, for the sake of Hinduism, our Sikh brethren expect of us that we should give our whole-hearted support to them and assure them that each and every citizen of India is with them.

Guru Gobind Singh preached religious harmony and friendship. He described religion as an instrument of serving humanity. It is not an instrument for slaying human beings. People will forget the Prime Ministers and their Governments. But history will never let any one forget the sacrifice of great persons such as Guru Gobind Singh.

Let us on this day resolve that we will not humiliate anyone, we will not exploit the weaknesses of others, we will try to respect the feeling and aspirations of others and attempt to resolve the problems of the country amicably.

I convey my good wishes to all the inhabitants of India and especially of Punjab. The country will ever remain indebted to our Sikh brethren for their sacrifices. Beginning from the days of Guru Gobind Singh to 1942, the sacrifices of the inhabitants of Punjab and especially of our Sikh brethren will ever remain fresh in our memory. I call upon the youths of Punjab to join us and resolve on this auspicious day that we will do our best to imbibe the self-control, courage and patience of Guru Gobind Singh so that we can raise India to a towering position. Whatever grievances we have should be thrashed out in a friendly way. Our problems can be solved amicably. Hatred for each other will ruin us, ruin the country—a country which the Gurus by their sacrifices had made great. Let us pledge today that we will work unitedly to make this country great—that will be our tribute to Guru Gobind Singh.

Rifle Training for Self-defence

I FEEL HONoured to be present here amongst you. Mr President, I am specially grateful to you and the office-bearers of the Association for inviting a man who has never handled a rifle, to inaugurate the shooting competition. But that does not mean that I do not know the importance of the rifle. It is a symbol of man's power.

With the progress of science man has invented a number of means to demonstrate his strength. Great strides have been made in the development of weapons. But still the debate is going on as to for what purpose the weapons may be used.

A person who knows how to use a rifle has confidence in himself and the society; and the country having such people also correspondingly feel confident. Thus you symbolise the honour of the country. People like you whether in the armed forces or in the police have set an example for us to follow, by your discipline and devotion to duty. A society can make progress only when its members are disciplined and have confidence in themselves. Your organisation combines both discipline and confidence. I convey my compliments to all the members of the Association for the great work they are doing.

We are passing through a difficult period. We want peace in the world. In fact people all over the world want peace. Still there are some want on forces which incite men to take each other's life. Even in the twentieth century some countries are looking for opportunities to subjugate the others. I feel ashamed in saying that in our own country too, certain forces are gaining strength which are endeavouring to indoctrinate the innocent people. Attempts are being made by the miscreants and antisocial forces to bring instability in the society by terrorising and forcing the poor and helpless persons to toe their line. Under such circumstances your Association can play even more important role. If you can widen your sphere and train every young man and woman in the use of rifle, such activities and tendencies can be contained effectively. It is necessary to train all young men and women in self-defence. Though I have never handled a gun, I want everyone in India to learn the use of arms for self-defence.

We do not want to hit any human being. But we do want injustice and exploitation to be our target. Arjun's bow was never raised to kill a helpless person but it was raised to put an end to injustice, exploitation and other evils of the society. I am sure that you will think on these lines.

Ours is a country with a large population and frontiers. However, big the army and police force we may have, we will not feel secure till we have a second line of defence comprising persons like you who would come forward to defend the country. I believe that we have to instil a feeling in every young man and woman that the responsibility of defending the country does not rest with the armed forces and police alone.

You have asked for funds. It is true that our financial condition is not good. However, it is not so bad either that we cannot provide you anything for promoting your activities. You should ask for your requirements without any hesitation, the Government is duty-bound to help you.

Scientific Temper

IT IS MY proud privilege to be with you this morning. I am meeting you in the beginning of the new year. I extend my warmest greetings to all of you. I salute the scientific community of this country and abroad with high expectations and hopes. You are the hope of tomorrow. Humanity has high expectations from the scientists, but Mr President, allow me to say, with a lot of apprehensions too. You have got the potentiality to bring prosperity but your knowledge or research sometimes bring disasters also. I shall not like to blame you. The blame comes to us, the politicians who utilize your accomplishments for the disaster of mankind. Perhaps, that was the idea which may friend, Mr Patwa had in mind when he said that there should be some seminar on the politics of disaster.

But I want to emphasise one point, that if the scientists do not contribute to the progress of humanity, we would not have come out of the dark ages. This is why I salute the scientist community and I am proud to say that infrastructure in our country of the scientific institutions has been quite elaborate in the past three decades. I agree that there is enough to be done. We cannot be satisfied with what we have achieved so far. But we are proud of our scientific institutions in this country. Many institutions are being run in various parts of the country by the State Governments

and also by the private sector. I am also proud that our scientists in this country have achieved a glorious name for this country and a grateful nation will always admire their dedication to duty and their pursuit for knowledge. I am glad that the young scientists are going to meet separately in this Conference because they have the vision for the future and they have greater responsibilities to discharge to meet the challenges of tomorrow. So, the nation looks towards them with expectation and hope that they will see the world and the problems of this country in a new perspective.

We cannot make progress in this world if we do not have a scientific attitude. Unfortunately, because of our old traditions, if I may be allowed to say, obsolete traditions, blind faith, decadent culture, many things are bogged down. Our scientific temper has not made much progress because of certain drawbacks in our social system. When I talk of social system, it is not the social system based on caste and religion, but I talk of the distorted economic development and social approach that we have taken during the last four decades, after the Independence.

I am sad to say that during the freedom struggle we had the privilege to look forward and we had high expectations and hopes, but today after four decades of Independence, we have taken to despair. I am glad that the Science Congress has its association with and draws inspiration from the national movement of this country. So, scientists in this country have always addressed themselves to the problems of the people, whether social, economic or human. That is an advantage for the Science Congress and for the society also that there is a type of integration in the approach of the scientists and the problems of the people of this country.

I want to congratulate you for taking the theme of the natural disasters for this Conference. Nature has always been compassionate to human beings. But sometimes there are devastations because of natural calamities. Natural calamities in this country have been an yearly phenomenon.

I was telling you that we have in research many accomplishments but the beneficiaries are not from the rural areas, of which, my

friend, Patwa was mentioning time and again. More than two lakh villages of our country are without the facility of drinking water. It is unfortunate that in a country where more than 2000 years back people gave a new philosophy to the world, more than 65 per cent people are today illiterate. At the turn of the 21st century, I think more than 50 crore people, almost 52 per cent population of the world's illiterates will be in this country. It is a matter of shame to all of us. The scientists have to decide how can we have a scientific temper unless and until we are able to make our population know the three Rs. If they are not able to get the facilities for having knowledge of alphabets, how can you give them the advantage of scientific research?

It is unfortunate that in spite of all the natural resources that we have at our disposal, we are not able to meet the basic minimum needs of our people. We are suffering because of poverty, squalor, misery and disease. My friend Patwa indicated about the natural resources of Madhya Pradesh. We have got the fertile land, a beautiful climate, all the natural resources, almost all the minerals upon which our development can depend. But more than 35 per cent of our people, according to the Government figures, are below the poverty line. And, what is the basis of the poverty line? That, we have yet to decide because if you take the standard of other nations of the world, more than 50 per cent of our people are below the poverty line. This unfortunate situation has to be changed. And this can be changed only by producing more.

For production, there are two factors—one is the willing cooperation of our people; if they don't give their toil, their willing cooperation, there is no hope for prosperity. That willing cooperation we can get by giving them assurance that what they produce will go for the benefit of their children, not for the privilege of the chosen few. This is the task of the politicians. But you have to provide some technology, through which people can produce more. I know that in many areas we have made advancements but we have yet to do much. In the field of agriculture, in the field of biotechnology, in other fields, our scientists have done wonderful work but unfortunately these researches have not reached the rural areas. We have to find out how we can develop extension work and solve the management

problem. These are two problems. In research and development and new innovations, the scientists have done much, but in the field of extension, in the field of management, we have to do a lot more in order to make available the fruits of your research to the poorer sections of the population, especially in the rural areas.

Employment generation is another area where people are looking forward towards you with expectation because our biggest asset is manpower. If we are not able to utilize manpower, we cannot hope to develop our country. This manpower cannot be utilized if we depend on the developed world. It is unfortunate that there has been a tendency in this country not to look towards the problems of our country in an objective manner. We are trying to import technologies that are not very relevant to our present situation.

To my mind the scientist is just like a tree. The tree gets its nourishment from the deep dark soil within but also takes nourishment from the sun and air. While the scientists in this country should have the vision to compete with the rest of the world in making innovations in the higher fields of knowledge, their roots should be deep down in the villages where there is poverty, squalor and misery. Unless and until you remember the unfortunate brothers and sisters who are living in extreme squalor and misery, science will not be able to play a meaningful role. Whatever may be the achievements, if the community is not able to understand the efforts that are being made to bring about a better future, a future of hope and confidence, a better future for the children, I don't think it will be possible for us to maintain the system and even the research that you make in your laboratories will be of any use. I do not know if this problem is going to be discussed in this forum, but as a political worker, I would appeal to you, and your colleagues, that you should give thought to this problem because if these disparities remain in the society they are bound to create social tensions and social tensions create a strain on the social structure.

My friend, Patwa said that this is a land of tribal people. If you see the tribal areas from Tamil Nadu to Tripura, there is unrest everywhere. Whether we are going to respond to their urges and

aspirations or are we going to use the coercive powers of the State to silence their aspirations and urges?

My friend, Patwa talked about politics. Politics is nothing but the art of managing the people. The very concept of the State was born out of the realisation of the man that what he cannot achieve himself, he could do that by collective wisdom. State manifests twofold attitudes of the human mind. One is helplessness, helplessness that he cannot live alone, so he surrenders some of his powers to the State. And, the other is the awareness of the mankind that in collective wisdom lies the salvation of the human problems. Whether we are going to depend upon the awareness of the people or upon the helplessness of the people? Where the State tries to exploit the helplessness of the people, those states become dictatorial, autocratic states. A welfare state always tries to expand the area of awareness of the people and if there is awareness among the people that their misery should be alleviated, it is a welcome sign. The scientists and the politicians together should try to direct their energy in that direction where we could meet the basic minimum needs of our people. A lot many things are to be done in this connection.

I was just talking about the natural calamities. More than Rs. 880 crore annually we lose only in floods. In the last May cyclone, the nation lost more than Rs. 2000 crore worth of property. If you see the cattle wealth that is destroyed every year during floods and droughts, that is enormous. I shall not go into these statistics. I do not know. My friend, Patwa, perhaps, has a better understanding. There seems to be some coincidence, where people are poor, where people are illiterate, where people have not developed scientific temper, only to them God sends the disasters very often. God also seems to be a little more partial. Where development is not there, all these natural calamities destroy the human effort in a big way.

I hope that while developing the abilities to forecast the natural calamities that are impending upon us, we shall be able to provide certain means or methods by which we can avoid them. Even if we cannot avoid the crisis, we would be able to forewarn the people so that the destruction becomes minimum.

The other problem is whatever development is there, if the development is not commensurate with the population, I don't know what is going to happen to this country. My friend, Patwa while mentioning about the poverty and problems of Madhya Pradesh, did not mention the population growth. That is the maximum in Madhya Pradesh and in other poor States because there is a direct link between poverty and birth-rate. I hope that the scientists will do some heart searching and find a way out. I know that there has been some research work but we have not been able to convince our population and specially the womenfolk in the villages that population control is a must for the prosperity of this country. Along with large population, there are health problems. In spite of all our efforts during the last four decades, child mortality has been the maximum in this country. Immunisation programme and research in child care has made an advancement but we have to do more in that direction. So, I shall request the scientists that they should do something for better population control methods and also for the immunisation programme so that people could have faith that if a child is born, he will survive. And then we have to provide the elementary health services and also the primary education to the children of this country. I hope and trust that scientists will go in that direction and give a message to the whole world. I know all these problems are only because of the obsolete traditions, of the outmoded values that we have inherited in our society. My friend, Patwa was making certain demands for his Government. I have no complaint. He should make demands because that has been the system in this country that every Chief Minister demands something from the Prime Minister. But I assure my friend, Patwa that there is no difference between the Chief Ministers and Prime Minister. All the wealth, all the resources belong to the whole nation. How these resources are to be divided, utilized and invested? The priorities have to be fixed by the people of this country as a whole and the scientists have to give us a direction, as to what are the areas where investments should be made. Because of the squabbles that this is mine and that is yours, we have not been able to select our priorities.

I assure you that if any nation wants to make progress, wants to have strides in development, they should give everything possible

to the scientists for their knowledge, for their research and for their activity. I assure you in spite of the limited resources at our disposal the Government will do everything possible to see that our institutions do not suffer. Mr President, you made certain observations and gave certain suggestions. The Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology who is a scientist himself, a dedicated person, will be with you all these days while your Congress is going on. He will take note of all your requirements. I can't say that everything will be fulfilled but we shall do our maximum to see that science and technology does not suffer in this country. It is not because I am doing any favour to you. If we look forward to the future of this country, I want to emphasise that, you are the only hope for this country and on you depends the future of this community, of the whole nation.

I also know that there are certain problems which are beyond solution for the time being. But we should not lose heart. We should not be discouraged. Despair and frustration cannot lead us anywhere. Only confidence and trust can. Trust in the future of our nation will make us move forward with certain amount of vigour and face the challenges of our time.

I also assure you that these fissiparous tendencies that are being exhibited in our country are also because of the unscientific temper in the country. We are, not years, but centuries back. Our seers told us:

Aham nijah paroveti gananam laghuchetasam!

Udaracharitanamtu Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

(It is mine. It is others. These are the views of the sectarian minds. Those who are generous, for them, the whole universe is a community, is a family.)

We want that the whole universe should be a family and live like a family and scientists have to make a greater contribution in this direction.

Let us try to find out areas where we can work with cooperation and cordiality. You have mentioned about the SAARC meeting. We said that we should begin at home and also in the neighbourhood. We requested the SAARC countries—and India

took a lead in this direction—that let political barriers not come in the way of scientific exchange of views. We decided that heads of all the scientific, and academic institutions of national importance will not require any visa to go to the SAARC countries. This is why that for the first time a political move was taken by the SAARC countries. The suggestion came from India that just as the Judges of Supreme Court, Parliament Members will be immune from visa, similarly, the heads of the national academic institutions will not require visa to go to the SAARC countries. We want that we should be able to exchange our knowledge with our neighbouring countries and also with the scientists all over the world. This has to be done by your institution. I only assure you that we shall extend full cooperation, help and support to you in this direction. If any suggestion is there, if any problems are there, you would always find the doors of the Government open for you. Scientists should not feel that the Government is doing any favour to them. It is our national duty. It is our responsibility to provide for the development of science in the country. In my priority list, science comes first because upon that depends the future of the country.

When I talk of science, I am glad that not only the Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology is present but also the Chairman of the University Grants Commission is also here. He is a man of science in the field of social sciences and is mobilising the human resources. He is one of the greatest citizens of this country. With these people, we can march ahead with confidence and I hope and trust that this Science Congress will take into consideration all these aspects of our problems. Don't be bogged down because of the political problems of today. I shall request my friend, Mr Patwa also not to bother about these political disasters. There have been many political upheavals in this country, it was divided many a time into hundreds of kingdoms. Rajas and Nawabs came, but nobody could dismantle its unity. If a man went for a pilgrimage nobody asked for a visa. If a man went from Bihar Sharif to Ajmer, no ruler asked for a visa from him. There is something more abiding in our country. These political problems are of a temporary nature. But if our scientists fail, we fail for centuries. The political problems can be solved by elections, if not by one election, at least by two or three elections. People will be spending some money, but if the scientists

fail we shall be failing in comparison with the other nations of the world. Let us hope, that under your leadership the Science Congress will be able to coordinate the activities of all the scientific workers and more so you should encourage the young scientists and specially the lady scientists because that is an aspect where we are lagging much behind. If you educate one male child, you educate only one citizen. If you educate one female child, you educate atleast a family. That distinction should always be there in your mind. So, if you encourage one young lady scientist you are giving the scientific temper to the ladies of this country, female folk of this country and on that you know depends the future in a long way because without family planning there is nothing possible in this country and family planning is not possible by the efforts of the scientists and doctors but only by making women aware of the need of family planning. I hope and trust that you will view the need for this country in that perspective.

I want to emphasise once more that with high expectations and hope I leave this conference and expect that your decisions will be a landmark for the progress and prosperity of this country.

Jamnalal Bajaj—a True Gandhian

I FEEL HONOURED today that I have got an opportunity to pay tribute to a great man. When we think of Jamnalal Bajaj, we think of that era which inspired us and gave us strength for creating a new world. The political instability in the world and in India generates the feeling that we are heading towards darkness. Suddenly we are reminded of our past glory. Indian history is old. It has witnessed so many ups and downs that we see a ray of hope in darkness. Whenever we think of Jamnalal Bajaj, we think of him as nucleus of strength, a nucleus which is embedded in the Indian mind and with whose help we could overcome all difficulties. I believe that India is a country of symbols and it is perhaps with the help of the symbols we have been able to keep our culture and civilization intact. It is immaterial whether the symbols represent gods and goddesses or individuals, they help us to preserve our strength and to have a vision of bright future even in adverse circumstances.

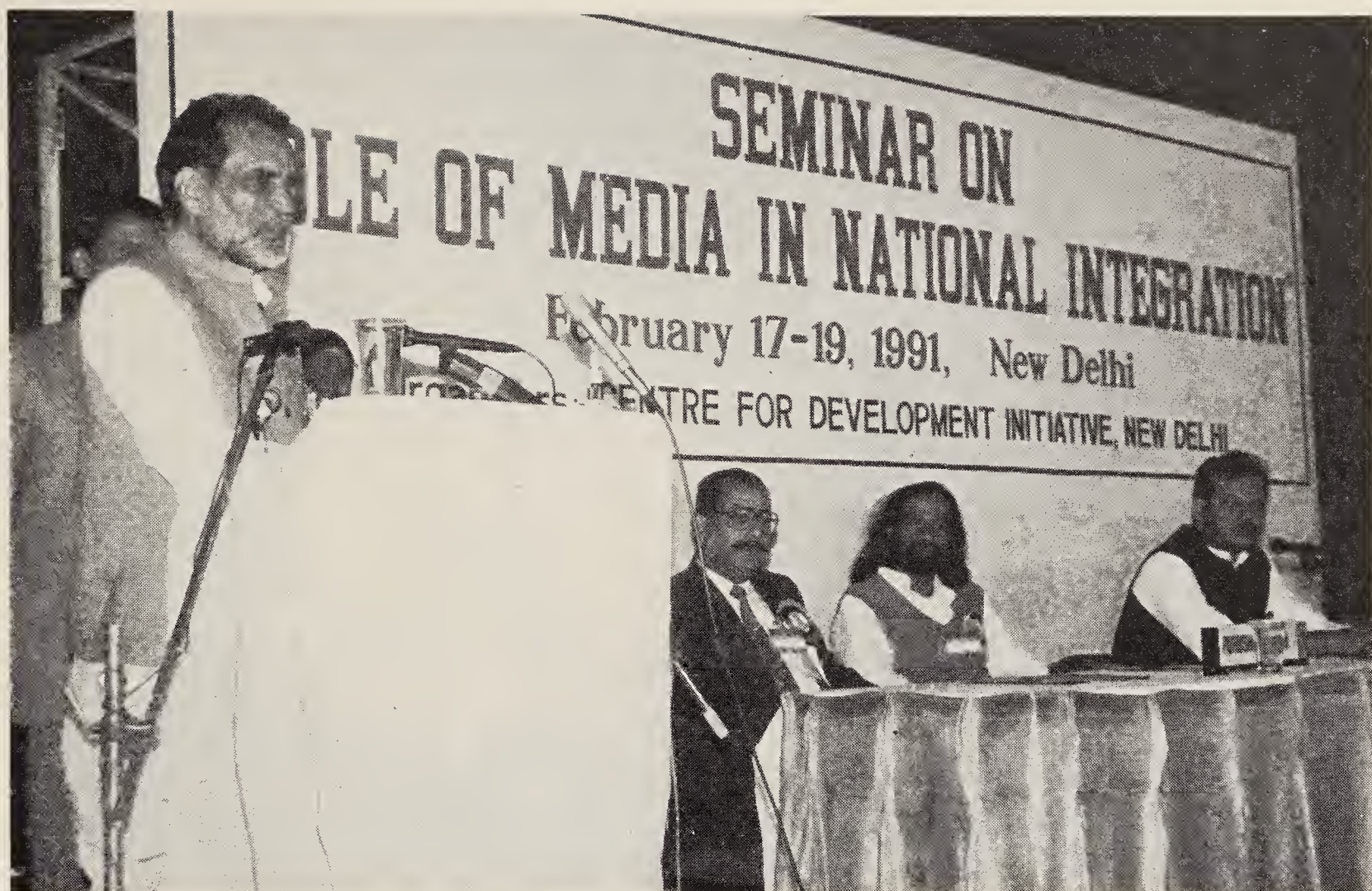
Many persons came in Gandhiji's contact. I do not want to name them. A number of businessmen and industrialists too came in his contact but there was only one Jamnalal. The other industrialists and businessmen might have performed very well in the industrial sphere. They would have earned money but Jamnalal alone could mould himself on the lines of Gandhian thought. A few

minutes ago Ramlal Parikh told me that Gandhiji's theory of trusteeship could still be put in to practice but to implement it, a person like Jamnalal Bajaj is needed. Every businessman cannot become Jamnalal Bajaj. We cherish his memory because he had grasped and imbibed the lofty thoughts of Gandhiji.

I am reminded of what Trotsky had said, viz., "Final stage of communism would be attained only when every citizen had reached the level of Plato and Aristotle." In the last fifty years we have witnessed the fate of Marxism—forget about touching the level of Plato and Aristotle, they have gone further down. We have all admiration for Gandhiji's theory of trusteeship. But we must bear in mind that while trying to put that in practice, we may not go off the track.

Jamnalal Bajaj practised what he preached. He involved his entire family in the freedom movement. He led a simple life. The ashram at Wardha testifies that by dint of hard work a person can rise. Gandhiji believed that even a hut can provide inspiration. Jamnalal Bajaj had the ability to put the vision of Gandhiji into practice. When we talk of constructive work, *charkha* does not mean constructive work, *khadi* is not a constructive work. Gandhiji had realized that if we want to change the society, we have to change men. In order to change men, we have to change the thinking of men and also we have to change ourselves. Mere sermons will neither change men nor the society. When we change ourselves we can make an attempt to change the society and that was Gandhiji's idea behind the constructive work. Gandhiji and Jamnalal Bajaj had realized that life is not a beautiful dream but it is full of woes and one who has not understood the woes of life has neither understood the society nor has the ability to change it. *Khadi* is not the salve for misery, unhappiness and pain. It is poor man's confidence and constructive work is a symbol of that confidence. Gandhiji had visualized it and Jamnalal Bajaj translated it into practice.

Ramkrishna had said that his family is trying to follow the footsteps of Jamnalal Bajaj. Rahul is my friend. He does try to follow the footsteps of Jamnalal Bajaj but only in exposition of his ideals. He does not have that simplicity which would prompt the



Addressing a seminar on Role of Media in National Integration, New Delhi, 19 February 1991



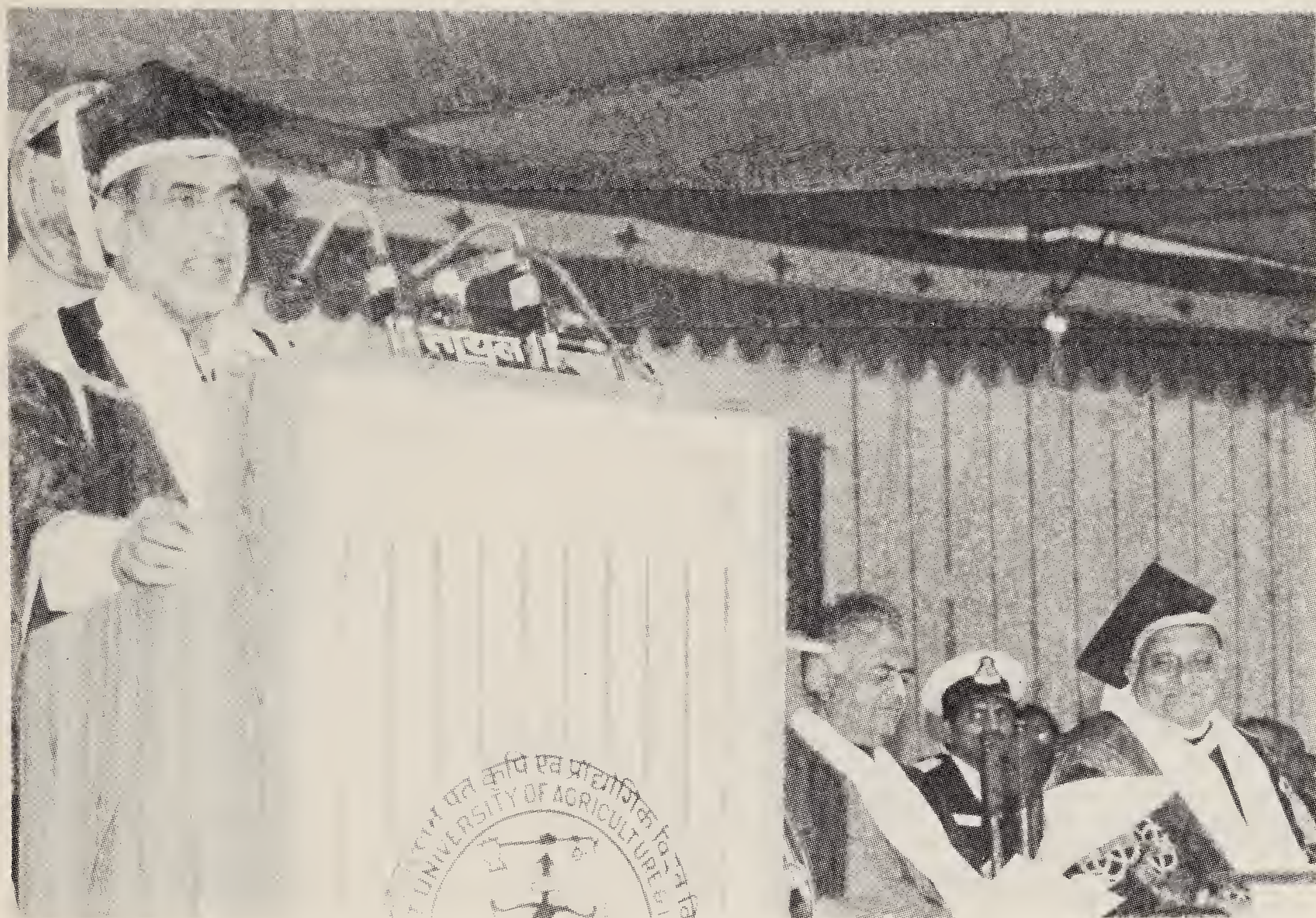
Unveiling a bust of Acharya Narendra Dev, Kharonda, Madhya Pradesh, 23 February 1991



Presiding over a meeting of the Central Ganga Authority, New Delhi, 26 February 1991



Chairing a meeting of the Planning Commission, New Delhi, 26 February 1991



Delivering the convocation address, G.B. Pant Agriculture University, Pantnagar, 10 March 1991



Inaugurating a seminar on the Future of Asia-Pacific Economies, New Delhi, 11 March 1991



At the presentation ceremony of the Bharatendu Harishchandra Awards, New Delhi, 14 March 1991



Releasing a commemorative coin on Dr B.R. Ambedkar during his birth centenary celebrations, New Delhi, 14 April 1991

poor to consider him as their friend. One can imbibe simplicity and sincerity of which Jamnalal Bajaj was a symbol, not in Delhi, Bombay, Pune, Calcutta, Moscow or Paris but in the lanes of villages. Ramkrishnaji was, no doubt, a head of your family but he was also a symbol of our big family and the country will always feel proud of him. He never confined himself in the four walls of the family. Such persons can never be tied to a family.

Gandhiji felt that we can make progress only by attaching importance to dignity of labour. It is only in our society that the jobs of gardening and scavenging are not given due importance. Those who keep their houses dirty are called Sethji, Babuji, Panditji or Maulviji etc., and those who are engaged in keeping their houses clean are called *bhangis*, low-castes and untouchables. Again it is only our society which recognises and even institutionalises this difference.

Gandhiji believed in dignity of labour and Jamnalal put that ideal in practice. I believe that to take work from the labourers needs ability; but to identify oneself with the poor and to give them solace is a great achievement.

Poverty and hunger are our two constraints. In spite of these constraints we have an inherent strength to keep us alive. In our country, great men have taken birth from time to time. Gandhiji was one of them. Jamnalalji was another. The country will always remember him with gratitude. I pay my tribute to him.

Marketing Strategy for Development

I KNOW THAT marketing and development is one of the important issues with which the world is concerned today. But the problems that we are facing today are much beyond its purview. Unfortunately, we live in a country where a large percentage of our population is not influenced by the market mechanism. It is not a very happy situation but if the reality of the situation is ignored, we cannot arrive at a right conclusion. It is true that for some of the developed nations it is one of the most important issues. For us too it is an important area, but there are other issues to which we have to pay more attention.

We are a country in which more than 30 per cent people are below the poverty line and that too is fixed according to our own standards. If you go by the standards of the developed world, more than 50 per cent of our population will be below the poverty line. When we talk of poverty line, we mean that the people are not able to meet the basic minimum needs of their life. A vast rural tract of our country is not influenced by what is happening in Europe, America or other parts of the world, if I may say so.

It is an unfortunate situation. Poverty in itself is a curse and relative poverty creates tensions. People can tolerate absolute

poverty but not relative poverty. This is why our tribal population from Tripura to Tamil Nadu, is in unrest. I am proud to say that India is one of the developing nations where democracy has functioned effectively and with certain amount of stability. There were certain periods of eclipse of democracy but the Indian people asserted themselves. Our old culture and civilization helped them do so despite their poverty and disparity of incomes. Whether you respond to their urges and aspirations, or compete with the western world—I don't say that you should not have the vision to compete with the most developed countries of the world—our feet should be on the ground, our mind should be concerned with the problems of our people. And, when you discuss management and marketing, you should always keep in mind the people who will ultimately become the arbiter of the destiny of the nation. Any amount of experiment, any amount of research, any amount of philosophy or any amount of talk about the other things will not keep them silent for a long time if their basic needs are not fulfilled.

I know there are nations. My friend just mentioned about Hong-Kong, Taiwan and South Korea. They can manage their affairs the way the western countries do. But India cannot do that. If all the developed nations of the world together try to bail us out, they cannot succeed. We are a nation of 880 million people. We are a nation with many problems. India will have to stand on her own legs. That is why the self-reliance, the *Swadeshi* is the keynote of India's economic development. Unless and until our enlightened people, especially the professors, the management experts convince the common people about that, any strategy of management is bound to collapse. We don't realise that all development and management strategies succeed only when there is a certain amount of stability, peace and order. Do you think that with the conditions prevailing in the country, we can remain a peaceful nation for a long time. I know that nobody will help you out unless and until you show certain amount of stamina, strength and inner capacity to withstand the pressure from outside.

The countries of the world are coming closer today. In spite of that is it not true that you have to accept many conditions if you want any help, any support from those quarters? My friend, Swamy

was in Brussels to discuss with the world leaders or world economic experts. What was the predicament of the developing nations there? One by one, every nation collapsed. If instead of Swamy had India been represented by any other person India's cause would also have collapsed. But how long can you resist or withstand the pressures from outside without the inner strength, economic strength or the cooperation of our people to make sacrifice. I would like to suggest to all of you what to produce, what should be the pattern of development, what should be our priority, what marketing strategy to introduce in the country. And, when I talk of this country, I talk of the whole developing world where the people are suffering the worst type of poverty, squalor and misery.

All of you are professors, intelligent people who visualise the world as it is going to be tomorrow, but you should also understand the world as it is today. If today's understanding is not clear, the vision of tomorrow is bound to be distorted. And, what is happening in the world today? I know that there is enough scope of liberalisation and liberalisation is a must, but liberalisation for what? Liberalisation to do away with the red-tapism, I can understand. Liberalisation to do away with interference by people who are not expected to interfere, I understand. But liberalisation does not mean squandering away the scarce resources. In a country like India which has scarce resources, all the ideas for liberalisation in support of making things easy, making the decisions quicker, making people realise that they will not be handicapped because of unnecessary interference, I can understand. But if you allow liberalisation in the fields where the scarce resources are to be squandered away, I am very sorry to say that, it will be mortgaging your future. That is what is happening. By using marketing skills, what psychology we are creating? We are catering to the needs of a small section of the society. Our all strategies are directed towards that. Export, yes, but export for what? Not for importing things which are not essential for this country. Importing things which are able to give support to us to meet the problems of man today.

When I talk of basic minimum needs, I talk of investment in man. Every child who is born in this country has the right to

survive. How can he survive when in more than one lakh villages there is no drinking water? How can he survive when he has not got the necessary calories to survive? How can he survive or compete in the world, whatever his philosophy or theory may be, if he is not able to get the elementary education and primary health services? We are bothered about how to bring these matters into the minds of those who are privileged today? Are we going to evolve any strategy as to how to keep the democratic system going in this country? This is the concern of not only India alone but of all the developing nations.

I know, in the competition whatever strategy you adopt, we cannot compete with the most fortunate nations if there is no realization that the real target is the man, the real goal is to make man's life happier, fuller and richer.

Unfortunately, this is not the trend of today's world. We talk of social dynamism, we talk of changes taking place in the world. Only a month back, I was hearing from all quarters, what a great revolution is taking place in the Soviet Union, how great is Mr Gorbachev! But what is happening in the Soviet Union today? Where are all those prophets of liberalisation who were to help the Soviet Union? The Soviet Union, one of the biggest powers, one of the most influential powers in the world, is going with a begging bowl to the smallest countries. This is the situation and nobody is going to help Soviet Union unless and until they are going to help themselves. Marketing theories, philosophies or economic liberalisation means that the poor should fend for themselves. This should not happen.

Let us address ourselves to this problem, let us learn from other's experiences. Whenever I hear these talks, I think that we are not concerned, excuse my saying so, about the people who don't know what is happening in the world because they are not conscious. Unfortunately or fortunately, in this country because of the democratic system, we are making our people conscious. Every time we go for elections, Subramaniam Swamy makes his election manifesto and promises everything to the people and when it comes to implementation, he begins to look around. This is not going to happen anymore. Constitutions are not changed with the

permission of the Parliament, not by the legal experts, not by the judiciary. The Law and Commerce Minister is not going to advise the people to overthrow the Constitution. Constitutions are overthrown in spite of judiciary, in spite of parliaments, in spite of state power. Let us not land ourselves in that situation.

I shall appeal to you, Mr Chairman and to your colleagues, if you have any marketing strategy, let us have some knowledge, insight on how to deal with the problems that we are facing today. I say whatever strategy you develop for your interaction with the rest of the world will be welcome and I think there are enough experts in the Ministry of Commerce who will be dealing with all these problems. But these are the problems of basic nature which are creating a sense of concern amongst the people of this country. I shall not go into the details of the economic situation of this country. All the countries around, countries of Africa, countries of South America, with all the knowledge, all the expert advice had, collapsed one by one. It is not that the people were criticising liberalisation for nothing. They believed that the liberalisation would bring El Dorado tomorrow, but that has not happened. Economic system one or the other doesn't help if the people don't help themselves. And this philosophy, one should understand.

I hope and trust that while, discussing the brilliant ideas of marketing and management, you should give us some insight as to how to manage the minds of the people who are suffering because they are not able to meet the basic minimum needs of life, how to manage the minds of those who in spite of economic power in their hands don't understand the problems of the poorer nations. These are the areas; you have to find some ways to manage the minds of the poor and to manage the minds of the rich because these two are going in divergent directions and it is bringing a conflict in the world situation. Let us try to find some solution where these two minds would converge and lead the humanity to peace and prosperity.

Indian Initiative at the SAARC Summit

I VISITED MALDIVES to participate in the Fifth SAARC Summit from 21st to 23rd November, 1990. The outcome of the Summit is incorporated in the Male Declaration and the Joint press Release issued at the end of the Summit. Copies of these documents are laid on the Table of the House.

During my stay in Maldives, I had bilateral discussions with former President Ershad of Bangladesh, President Gayoom of Maldives, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan and Prime Minister Wijetunga of Sri Lanka. I also had the pleasure of meeting in Male, His Majesty the King of Bhutan and Prime Minister Bhattarai of Nepal, but detailed bilateral talks with them were held after their arrival in New Delhi immediately after the Summit.

India took a number of initiatives at the Summit and the meetings preceding it, all of which were accepted and are reflected in the Male Declaration and the Joint Press Release.

At our suggestion, regional cooperation under SAARC has been extended to the field of biotechnology. Our proposal to create a Fund for the identification and development of regional projects, to be financed by National Development Banks of the member-countries, was also accepted. We will host a meeting of the

representatives of these Banks to work out the precise modalities for the operation of the Fund.

India will also host the Second Ministerial Meeting on International Economic Issues to review the outcome of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations and to coordinate the positions of the member-countries at the forthcoming UN Conference on Environment and Development. It was agreed that the same Ministerial meeting would also prepare a strategy for mobilising regional resources which would encourage and strengthen individual and collective self-reliance in this region.

We also suggested, and it was decided, that measures for establishing joint ventures in the field of cottage industries and handicrafts should be taken up forthwith to set a stage for promoting collective self-reliance in the region.

A major decision taken at the Summit was to establish three additional regional centres, namely, the Centre for Human Resource Development in Pakistan, the SAARC Documentation Centre in India and the SAARC Tuberculosis Centre in Nepal. We are taking necessary steps expeditiously to set up the SAARC Documentation Centre in India.

There were several other significant achievements at the SAARC Summit. We agreed to increase tourism in the region. We decided to facilitate greater contacts among our newspaper federations. We announced the 1990s as the Decade of the Girl Child. We launched a SAARC Travel Document to enable visa-free travel for some categories of people. Our Foreign Ministers signed an important Regional Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

My discussions with President Gayoom were very cordial and friendly. We have no bilateral problems between us and mainly discussed some of the major projects of mutual cooperation on which there was complete identity of views. President Gayoom was kind enough to accept my invitation to visit India. The visit will take place soon.

In my bilateral talks with Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, I was impressed by his positive approach. He showed an awareness of the

cost to both the countries of continuing an adversarial relationship as well as of the benefits inherent in a cooperative relationship. I fully reciprocated his sentiments and sought his cooperation in restoring trust and confidence between our two countries.

I expressed our concern at continuing support from across the border to terrorism in the States of Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. I emphasised that this is a serious irritant in our relations. We agreed that all differences between India and Pakistan should be resolved peacefully and through dialogue and that the process of reconvening discussions on the various pending issues should be resumed.

Consequent upon our meeting, the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan have met and made progress towards reaching agreement on several confidence building measures to reduce tension in our relations. They have also determined the time table for the resumption of discussions on issues such as the demarcation of the land boundary at Sir Creek, the Tulbul Navigation Project and the meetings of the Sub-Commissions.

In my meeting with the Prime Minister, Wijetunga, I expressed our concern at the continuing ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka involving heavy casualties on both sides, including civilian casualties, and the resultant influx of refugees into India. I also emphasised that the Government of Sri Lanka should take measures for resisting and reversing the flow of refugees to India and create conditions for their early return to Sri Lanka. We also discussed the possibility of expanding our cooperation in the trade and economic field.

Before concluding, I would like to reiterate India's commitment to South Asian cooperation under SAARC. This is essential for accelerating our economic development, building individual and collective self-reliance and enhancing our bargaining strength in multilateral negotiations. Such cooperation has become all the more necessary in the context of the present trend towards economic integration in the world. The Male Summit has substantial achievements to its credit. SAARC is now poised for launching itself upon the path of cooperation in the hard core

economic areas like trade, industry, energy, finance and environment. What is needed is the political will to move confidently in these new areas. Consistent with its size, resources and stage of development, India would continue to assume responsibility, and even make sacrifices, where necessary, to make SAARC an effective and full-fledged venture of regional cooperation.

Scientists—the Pride of the Nation

IT IS MY proud privilege to be with you this morning. I congratulate all the scientists who have been given this prestigious award.

Scientists are the hope of tomorrow and they are also the apprehension of tomorrow, that they should understand. Their accomplishment is the strength of the nation, but from their accomplishments many a problem arise before the humanity. Just this morning, I was discussing about the problems that are being created because of the tensions in the Gulf area. Scientists have given many avenues to us to have reconstruction or development of the world but simultaneously they provide us the weapons of destruction. But I don't want to blame you because you are for the construction and development. We, the politicians are responsible for the destructive activities that are being perpetrated upon the humanity because of wrong decisions, because of envy, jealousy and discord in the human mind.

I shall like to congratulate you not only for you accomplishments and the honour and dignity you have brought to the nation but also because in spite of our shortcomings and many vicissitudes you have done well in the field of science for which any nation will be proud. I know that the Government has been making

some effort to provide facilities to the scientists in this country, but we know under what strain and constraints you have been working and trying to do your research. In spite of all these limitations, scientists in this country have done well and for that the nation will always remain grateful to them.

But I would like to request you to pay attention to the areas which have been neglected so far. The achievements of science have provided benefits to a small section of our population. It is unfortunate that a large section of humanity is totally untouched by the achievements of science and scientific developments. I would not like to blame you but the blame is on the whole society. Society has been developing in a way where a large section have been neglected.

A country which was the leader in the field of philosophy and knowledge and even in science centuries back is worst affected today because more than 65 per cent of its people are illiterate. With the turn of the 21st century, more than 50 crore people in this country will remain illiterate. That will constitute more than 52 per cent illiterate population of the world. This is a matter of concern and shame for the whole nation. Scientists have to find ways and means as to how to do away with this stigma. That should be the concern of all of us. Whatever is achieved in the laboratories, whatever our scientists have found out in their researches, that should go to the benefit of not only the chosen few but to ameliorate the conditions of the millions in this country.

I was just discussing this problem with the medical scientists in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences where they were concerned about the cardiac diseases and hypertension. But unfortunately, most of our District Hospitals do not have even the elementary diagnostic facilities. How can a nation be satisfied that while making researches for everything, we are not able to provide the elementary things. While launching satellites we are not able to have an efficient communication system. It is easy to launch a satellite, the Aryabhata can go round the atmosphere but it will be very difficult to get a telephone connection from South Delhi to Pusa Institute. This is something which we should be ashamed of, which we should be concerned about. While in the higher fields, we

are able to make long strides, in case of the day-to-day problems that concern the common men, we have not achieved much. The science should be pressed into the service of the common citizens.

I am quite hopeful and confident that your attention will go to these smaller problems, while involving yourself in higher research because that is also important. Any nation which wants to achieve a prestigious position in the world community should always try to compete with the rest of the world, but while doing so we should not try to ignore the realities on the ground. The reality is that we are a nation of poverty. Poverty does not mean that we are poor. Nature has bestowed everything upon us. We have got the natural resources, the fertile soil and the scientific knowledge. But in spite of that we have not been able to synthesise the human labour and the natural resources that are at our disposal. The result is that we are a society of scarce resources. We are an illiterate nation. We have also to find the ways—how to employ the manpower asset so that we could produce more and bring a sense of satisfaction among the larger masses. Let us not forget that we are a democratic society where every citizen whether rich or poor, literate or illiterate, is going to determine the destiny of the nation and if he gets disenchanted, frustrated and disappointed, there is no hope of democratic system's continuance in this country. This is creating a lot of social tensions. These social tensions can be resolved only when people have at least some feelings that leaders of the society—and, when I talk of leaders of the society, I don't mean the political leaders; leaders in the academic world, leaders of industry, science and social system—are concerned about their poverty, misery and squalor. Unfortunately, this has not happened.

I have no other option but to depend upon your goodwill, upon your gesture because your gesture will go a long way. A little gesture from the scientists, if they feel that they can do something to restore the sense of confidence among the poorer sections in the rural area and the tribal area, will ease the tension. Tension, not only in Punjab, Kashmir, or Assam, these are to some extent political tensions, but if you see the tribal belt, the people are not in a mood to tolerate what is happening today because they see that whatever the scientific advancement may be, whatever the

development projects maybe, they are not the beneficiaries of that and that is why from Tripura to Tamil Nadu, there is an atmosphere of unrest and apprehension.

We will have to do something to assuage their feelings. In order to respond to their urges and aspirations, you and your colleagues will have to go a long way to create a sense of participation among the people who are still almost in dark ages today. They are suffering from superstition and obsolete traditions. All this requires a scientific mind. Scientific mind can be diverted or can be extended to these sections only when you go from your laboratories to the vast field of human laboratory where you have to deal with the human mind.

I hope that while doing research on the scientific issues or scientific problems, you will try to understand the problems of human mind. If the human mind is not directed in the constructive channel—the society will not move in an orderly way. I am sorry to say I don't want to create a sense of panic—all these achievements will be of no avail.

I hope that the scientists who have made great contribution to the knowledge will also make contribution to bring a sense of confidence and trust among the poorer sections of the society.

I once more congratulate all the scientists who are the pride of this nation.

Preventive Cardiology

IT IS MY proud privilege to be with you this morning. I know very little about cardiology and also the science of medicine but I know you as a community, one of the noblest communities of the world. I salute you all. You are engaged in this noble task to alleviate the sufferings of mankind. This is one profession where even war does not change the minds of the doctors, who even in battlefield try to save the life of the enemy. That is the tradition of the medical profession.

I am glad that you are trying to reduce the sufferings of human body. I am also glad that you are trying to see that preventive measures are taken, so that people don't suffer from many diseases. There are certain things which we create for ourselves. Dr Tandon just now told us that we should stop the cultivation of tobacco. I would have very much liked it. I am against smoking not because of medical reasons, but because of the smell that I cannot tolerate. I have been pleading with all my colleagues that they should give up smoking. But I think that smoking is a habit acquired by the people who feel frustrated. Smoking becomes a habit because of lack of will power; people who have nothing to engage themselves in, try to divert their attention to smoking. This weakness of human mind or human heart has to be changed not by just stopping cultivation of

tobacco but the smoker should be given some alternative to think about and they should have more self-confidence. Life is a very complex thing, full of both virtues and vices. If we concentrate ourselves on the virtuous tasks and try to identify ourselves with the problems of the human sufferings, perhaps we shall be less inclined to take to smoking or other addictions that people get accustomed very easily. But we get ourselves involved in our own problems and that gives us a sense of frustration.

I think that the doctors should not only depend upon the medicine or the preventive measures but they should do something to change the psychology of the people. I don't know what is more necessary, whether the physical health or the mental health. Psychiatrists have to play more meaningful role in today's world than the cardiologists, excuse me for saying so, because the whole psychology of the world is going in a wrong direction. Sometimes you see that hope is there but simultaneously there are trends of despair. When the people are living in so much tension, there are bound to be diseases like blood pressure, or the cardiac problems.

This is a situation which is not to be controlled by the doctors alone, but this is to be taken care of by all those who determine the destiny of mankind. It is unfortunate that they are not taking a comprehensive view of the human problems. We think in segments and as long as we try to solve problems in segments, we shall not be able to prevent certain things which could have been avoided by collective effort of human beings.

You are doing a noble job. You can do something to help people if they suffer from hypertension or from cardiac diseases, but politicians create conditions by which tensions go on increasing. So, your work gets increased. I don't know whether you like to welcome it or not because more patients, more problems. But it gives you more opportunity for more research, more conferences, more seminars. I would very much like that such seminars and such conferences are reduced to the minimum. But given the situation all over the world, and especially in our country, we are not able to do this. If you think of cardiac problems and think of the problems that certain sections of the people are facing today, we totally ignore the people who are suffering the most. And that is the

situation operating in spite of all our expressions in the other directions.

We are in a country where more than 50 per cent people are below the poverty line from the world standard. According to our statistics, just 30 per cent of our people are below the poverty line. Here is a country where more than 70 or 80 per cent people die without a pill of medicine. That is another area where we should try to concentrate ourselves. Very little attention has been given in that direction.

There are areas where even at the distance of 100 kilometres there are no diagnostic facilities. We have not been able to provide ordinary diagnostic facilities to those areas. If a person dies of heart attack in the remote village, people think that some evil spirit has taken him away and he had died all of a sudden. This is not true only of the tribal areas. This is true of the villages where a person like me was born and we have not been able to provide any medical attention or medical help to these people. We have a long way to go if you want to provide atleast the minimum health care to our people.

Elementary health services should be the concern of the society today but we have not been able to do much. Every child who comes into this world has certain rights. He should be given atleast the clean drinking water, necessary calories that he does not go blind at the age of six or seven. The pregnant mothers should not suffer for want of necessary nutrition. They should receive elementary education and primary health services. If we are not able to do even these things, what is the use of talking about big things. This can be done only by tightening our belts.

We will have to cut our consumption in certain areas in order to meet the basic needs of our people. I think health care should be one of the primary objectives of any government or any society. It is unfortunate that we have done very little in this direction. This institution where we are today was built sometimes in the fifties. After that we have not been able to build another institution of this type in the whole country. This gives an indication of how much careful we are about the problem of population in the medical field. We have to do something in a more vigorous way.

I am glad that all of you have come here. You will enlighten us about the problems of hypertension and cardiology, but I would like your seminar to give attention to the basic problems which the developing countries are facing today. I know that India will not remain a developing country for a long time. But it is not in our hands because many a time we are influenced by the happenings outside.

Just now I am coming from a meeting where we were thinking of the fallout of the Gulf crisis. If the Gulf war comes, we don't know what is going to happen here. It is not only the economy that will suffer, the gas that is produced or generated by the oilfields if burnt will create a serious problem even for a country like India. If the chemical war takes place there, which is being threatened by both the sides every day, I don't know what is going to happen and we will be overbusy in tackling that problem. This situation is out of our hands.

So, it is not the question of developing countries or developed countries, even the developed countries, if something happens because of the folly of the humanbeings at the top who are in a decision-making position, may create serious problem for the whole humanity. I don't know how far your community, which is as I said the noblest community, will be able to help the humanity if the politicians, if the decision-making people who are at the helm of affairs are determined to create problems for the whole world.

So, we shall have to take a comprehensive view. We will have to share the misery of the people. The problem is that we are vying with each other to have more wealth, to have more comfort, but as long as we try to compete with the most developed people or the most fortunate people, we shall not be able to tackle the problems of humanity. The problem of humanity can be tackled only if we are ready to identify ourselves with the problems of the poor. The poorman is nobody's concern.

I hope and trust that whatever decisions are taken by your seminar will not only be confined to your institute but their benefits will go to the nook and corner of the country. Something should be done by which people should atleast get the facilities of diagnostic system. If people are suffering from hypertension, from

heart diseases, if the symptoms are there, I think your conference or your seminar or you as an institution should try to provide some facilities by which people could get forewarned. How can you caution them if you don't know and if the patients do not know that they are suffering from a fatal disease like cardiac disease. But unfortunately, what to talk of the remote places, even in the District hospitals, such facilities are not available.

I shall beg of you, prepare a plan where atleast this facility should be available in the coming few years, atleast in the next two years, where diagnostic facilities about the heart diseases, about hypertension may be available at the District headquarters. This should be the aim of this conference. I feel that this conference, this seminar will give us a lead, a message how we can serve our people best.

I once more salute all of you who are engaged in this noble task. Humanity has the last hope from you because where there is devastation, there is enmity, there is envy, there is hatred, you represent the forces of compassion, human sympathy. The profession of medicine is the hope of the virtuous world which we want to create. Let us hope that you will give a lead in that direction. While making some searching innovations for tackling the problems of cardiology you shall do some heart searching in order to give solace to the people who have been suffering for so long not only because of heart diseases but the diseases which are of elementary in nature. I hope Mr President under your leadership we shall get a new initiative, a new inspiration to care for the problems of the poor.

Message of Love

THE CASSETTES WHICH have been released today, would make any country proud. Hundreds of years ago, Guru Nanak's message had given a new inspiration to this country. Perhaps those were also the dark days, when humanity was floundering in search of light. Just then Nanak gave a new message—a message of love, brotherhood and of founding a new world based on each other's help. He taught us that every human being is a child of God. We would not be able to achieve anything if we hate each other or if we are jealous of each other. To achieve our ultimate goal we have to love humanity from the depth of our hearts. This message of Nanak is the greatest achievement of our culture and civilization.

Guru Nanak's message transcends sectarian outlook and gives us the strength to see man as a member of a greater human family. It is a sad thing that today religion is used not to gain affection of fellow-beings but to create hatred among them. Guru Nanak had spent most of his life in Punjab, where he had most of his followers. Lives of Gurus not only give us the message of love and peace but also teach us to be brave and steadfast. It is a very sad state of affairs that today blood flows on the soil of Punjab. The people of Punjab are shedding each others blood—it is the same Punjab which once vibrated with songs of love and joy. Guru Nanak

taught us that all religions are equal but today some people are bent upon killing each other in the name of religion. They want to repay hatred with hatred, violence with violence. They want to wipe out the religious differences with swords, never once thinking of the message of love, peace and restraint, taught to us by Guru Nanak or Jesus Christ. They also forget that the sword which helped them once, could also be an instrument of their undoing. Therefore, the answer to bloodshed is not the rifle but love. That was the message of Guru Nanak and after centuries Rajneesh again gave that message to us. I congratulate R.V. Pandit for bringing out these cassettes. Rajneesh attempted to put before the world Guru Nanak's *Japji* in a new form. Any community can be proud of such an effort. I do not know whether you know about the cassettes of Rajneesh. But when R.V. Pandit recited one of his couplets to me, I felt that Rajneesh had revived Guru Nanak's *Japji*. Rajneesh was a great scholar and great thinker who loved humanity. His ways of manifesting love were different—people may not approve of those. But it is evident from the tapes that Rajneesh had tender feelings for humanity and that is why he could render Guru Nanak's *Japji* so well in his lectures

I tender my wholehearted support to those who are trying to put before the people the message of Rajneesh and Guru Nanak.

I would only say that a seed of hatred should not be sown in a country where message of love had always prevailed. I feel proud to say that the *Guru Granth Sahib* is one religious book which has tried to incorporate teachings from all religions. Let us bow our head in memory of Guru Nanak and draw inspiration and strength from him to work for a new society. Rajneesh too has given us strength and for that I pay my tributes to him.

Fulfilling Social Purpose through Public Sector

IT IS UNFORTUNATE that the Public Sector has not done as was expected of it. We started the Public Sector—many people tend to forget the history—because the private sector was not willing to invest in some areas. In many capital goods industries, the investment rate was very high and the gestation period was very long. There was no opportunity for quick profits. The people in private sector wanted to have quick profit, and so mostly they wanted to switch over to the consumption goods industries. This aspect of history of our industrial development is very conveniently forgotten by the people who are criticising the public sector day-in-and-day-out. But it can't be an excuse for the way the public sector has been functioning. Inefficiency, losses not only in a big way but also to the extent of losing the whole capital investment and over-staffing in many areas are the ills of the public sector. But for that, management alone is not responsible, We as the Government are very much responsible for what is happening in the public sector today.

Soon after coming into the Government, I asked the Ministry of Industry to give me details about the functioning of the public sector undertakings. I was shocked and surprised to learn that for months and years, more than 80 public sector undertakings have

been without the Chairmen or the Managing Directors. Nobody cares for them. If you ask them, they have no answer why this thing has happened. I don't believe that there are no persons to man these organisations. There are people who can take care of these institutions but there was a total apathy towards the public sector. Had this been the private sector, the people would not have neglected it in this way.

The responsibility is that of the Government and also the Members of Parliament because there is the Public Sector Undertakings Committee of the Parliament. I do not know what is happening there as I have never been on that Committee for the last twenty years. But how these things could have happened and could be tolerated by the Public Undertakings Committee? I can't understand the callousness of the Government as such.

Now, we are getting it examined. I have asked one officer of the Additional Secretary or Joint Secretary rank to go into the details of every public sector undertakings. I am told that some of these undertakings cannot run at all. I don't know what is the situation. But we must know the real position and we shall try to retrieve the situation as best as we can. My target is that before the budget session we should be able to speak with certain amount of confidence about the real situation. If we have no objective assessment of the real situation, there is no point in talking about taking corrective measures.

We have been talking on every platform about making the situation more forward looking. But unfortunately, even the elementary thing of assessment has not been done. So, that is what we have to do.

Public Sector cannot be done away with in this country. It is not possible even in other countries which have accepted the total policy of *laissez faire*. What amount of work they should be given is a matter to be considered. I am not supporting public sector as a doctrinaire approach but it is the need of the economy and I don't know what the private sector means in this country—that is debatable. I don't want to enter into that debate now. Most of the financial assistance and the financial investment are again the

public sector investments. So the money is invested by the public sector and the management is given to the private sector. If you go into the details of the failure of the private sector, that story also will not be very happy one and that will be almost as dismal as that of the public sector.

But the public sector is scrutinised by the Auditor General, by the Parliament and by the Government. Private sector is scrutinised but just for a name sake, just for a ceremonial purpose and you know how these audit reports are managed in the private sector. That kind of management is not possible in the public sector. But these excuses are not giving us any help. We have to find how to make the public sector more efficient.

Over-staffing is one problem that has been the bane of all problems in the public sector. Unfortunately, we cannot retrench people given the labour laws that are operating in the country. But something has to be done in that direction.

The other thing is that we should not get inhibited by taking a fresh look about certain public undertakings which are totally obsolete and cannot be remunerative. We should do something to put those units to some better uses if they are not able to fulfil the purpose for which they were set up.

I feel that the people who are managing the private sector are the management experts. They are not available only to the private sector, they are available to us also. A lot of talking is going on in this country about the privatisation as in other parts of the world. But take the case of United Kingdom where they are not going in for the public sector or private sector, but they are handing it over to the professional management. Why should we not consider this aspect that some of our public sector undertakings should be given to the professional management personnel? Government should help, and should give them more manoeuvrability, more powers to take decisions.

Unfortunately, what has happened is that the public sector undertakings became a department of the Government and there was a tendency among the officials, the political bosses in the Government or the Ministers to run these undertakings by sitting

in Udyog Bhawan. That tendency has to be curbed. The people who are on the spot, should be given the freedom to take decisions. No person is infallible. He can make mistakes. Whether a political leader or a professional one or a bureaucrat, everybody is liable to make mistakes.

The other thing was that while the political interference went on, the bureaucratisation also became a serious restraint on the functioning of the public sector undertakings. IAS officers are appointed without assessing their capability to run the public undertakings. I am not against appointing IAS officers for running the industry, but at least there should be some test of aptitude or at least their inclination should be found out. But in most of the cases, I see that an officer who was either not efficient in the administration or was not liked by the bosses, was shunted out to the public undertakings. This is not the way to run the public sector undertakings.

So, many things are to be done. A comprehensive policy has to be evolved regarding the public sector undertakings. I am not in a position today to say what actual moves will be made by the Government. But I am quite definite that any idea of just giving blank condemnation to the public sector is not a healthy thing.

The world of economic affairs is most cruel, where no consideration is shown by anybody. People just begin to feel that if you do something politically, it will have economic response from the richer nations. Richer nations have not become rich by being generous. They have become rich by exploiting the people of other countries. I will give you just one example and that will give you an idea how things are happening in this world. Now, you know, the Gulf crisis is there. A few weeks back, they sounded us that they would impose more charges on the insurance of the airlines. Airlines insurance rates were raised by companies in London and the Government of India was asked to get its airlines insured. Airlines means passengers and accidents. All other things are just covered by general insurance. There is a special insurance. If the war situation is there you may be hit by a bullet or by an enemy's plane, for that war risk, you have to cover the aeroplane as such, just the body of the aeroplane or the structure of aeroplane or the

machine that you have got. So India was asked to pay rupees five and a half crore per week for running our airlines in the Gulf. What has happened is that most of the developed nations have withdrawn their airlines because they have no stake in the Gulf. India cannot withdraw because we have got 12 lakh of our nationals there. The matter was brought before me. I assured them that we would pay five and a half crore of rupees every week. But what would be the benefit? I was told that if we were hit by any fighter plane, our plane would remain secured. I asked what is the book value of the plane. I was told it would not be rupees 5 crore. Substitute value is hundred crores, that is altogether different. Then I said to wait for the day when the war takes place, that day we would stop our operations. This is how the war expenditure is being met by the developing nations because the bigger nations or the developed nations can easily withdraw their fleet from that area, we cannot withdraw. This is how exploitation takes place in the world economy and nobody spares anybody whether it is a war, or a misery, or a natural calamity. So, economic interests are there.

I am reminded of one sentence of Marx. He wrote that political economy deals with the human welfare. If you go to the Pope or the Bishop of a church in London and say that all the 38 cardinals in the Book of Christianity are totally wrong and you don't agree with them, the Bishop would say we are all brothers of the Great-Almighty, we are all sons of the Great Almighty and he would talk of compassion, sympathy, tolerance, human brotherhood. But if you say that one yard of land of your Church belongs to me, he would forget all the theories of compassion and human sympathy, he would take the cross and just hit you. So it is when the economic interests are hampered, people lose all balance of mind and it is how rich nations have become richer. I am saying this because you know I don't want to annoy any rich nation of today's world but this is the reality of the life.

So India will have to stand on its own legs, not only because of ideological considerations, not because of our theory of self-reliance and *Swadeshi*, but for its very size, for its very history, and for the potentiality it has. Nobody in the world wants that India should become a superpower or a big power. They don't want that

India should be self-reliant because the very size of India, the very nature of its natural resources, the very strength of our population is a challenge to many people in the world who want to dominate the world scene. So, India has no other option but to stand on its own legs and there the public sector will have to play a very vital role.

I am glad that you have convened this meeting. I would have liked very much to discuss various aspects with you. You have taken this initiative. I would like that all of you should debate what should be done and we will have to have a fresh look on the functioning of the public undertakings. I shall seek your cooperation, help and support in evolving a policy that will allow the public sector to play its historic role. We should understand that public sector is one of the cardinal principles of our economic development and that should not be ignored and I hope that given some better attention and some more meaningful assessment of the situation, we can convince the people that it is not as bad as some people are trying to project. It has a social purpose to fulfil.

I am confident that you will address yourself to these problems and find a way out to help us out of the present situation.

Philosopher-Statesman Ho Chi Minh

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome the distinguished son of Vietnam, General Giap. General Giap is here with us to celebrate the Birth Centenary of the great Vietnamese leader, Ho Chi Minh. There could be no better place for such celebrations than this vibrant city of Calcutta—a city which symbolises the revolutionary spirit of the Indian people. Your presence, Madame Giap has added to our happiness.

India and Vietnam were among the first Asian nations to break the colonial fetters. Mahatma Gandhi mobilised the Indian people and moulded them into a potent political force which wrested freedom from the mighty British Empire, through peaceful non-cooperation.

In Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, inspired and led his people in their struggle against colonial rule. It was a long and bitter fight for the brave people of Vietnam in defence of their freedom and reunion of their divided nation. They triumphed against all odds. The people of Vietnam have demonstrated that even the greatest military might cannot crush the will of a determined nation. The epic struggle of Vietnam is one of the stirring stages of history. It is an enduring example of the courage of ordinary men and women, moved by a just cause. We, in India, salute their resolute spirit.

Ho Chi Minh, like Mahatma Gandhi, was a man of the masses. Simplicity was his hallmark....As a leader, he never lost touch with the people. He identified himself with them in their trials and tribulations and they bestowed on him their abundant affection and respect. He was "Uncle Ho" to them. He combined in himself the courage and daring of a man of action and the sensitivity of a man of literature. He was a true philosopher-statesman. We, in India, fondly recall his visits here in 1948 and 1958 and deeply cherish the affection and regard that he had for India and her people.

Above all, Ho Chi Minh remains an enduring symbol of the indomitable human will. Long years in prison, could not break his spirit or deter him from his goal. In a poem written while in prison he said:-

"The body is in jail
But the spirit never
For the great cause to prevail
Let the spirit soar forever."

Even today, his memory is a source of inspiration to freedom loving people all over the world.

We are, indeed, fortunate to have General Giap here with us as we remember Ho Chi Minh. As a student of Law, he could have made a brilliant and successful advocate. But he walked away from the easy life to plunge into the struggle for freedom. As a comrade-in-arms of Ho Chi Minh, he displayed great tactical skill, daring and imagination. His campaigns have become classics, which are studied by soldiers and scholars alike. The victory which he achieved at Dien Bien Phu against superior forces was a turning point in the war against colonialism. Whenever men sing of deeds of valour and heroism, Dien Bien Phu and General Giap will be remembered.

Today, both India and Vietnam have taken their places in the comity of nations as free countries. We are now engaged in the equally compelling and, perhaps, more complex task of nation buliding, for, political freedom, unless accompanied by freedom from hunger, disease and illiteracy would tend to become meaningless.

Our achievements are substantial. But we still have considerable distance to traverse. I am confident, however, that both India and Vietnam have the inherent strength and resilience to emerge as stable and economically prosperous societies, offering opportunities for full development of our people.

The close friendship between India and Vietnam is based on our common commitment to peace, freedom and justice. We will continue to work with Vietnam for peace and stability in Asia, as elsewhere.

Our interaction with Vietnam and Indo-China stretches back many centuries. Our cultures have influenced and enriched each other. Today, our cooperation extends across a wide range of activities—in the field of culture, economics and science and technology.

The people of Cambodia have suffered greatly. We support efforts to find a peaceful solution which will end the tragic conflict there and enable the Cambodian people to live in peace and rebuild their shattered economy. Such a solution must ensure Cambodia's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-aligned status.

As we commemorate the Birth Centenary of the immortal Ho Chi Minh, let us rededicate ourselves to his ideals:

Let us be vigilant about our hard-won freedom.

Let us tap the creative energies of our people.

Let us strengthen our self-reliance.

Let us fight against the shame of starvation in a world of plenty.

Let us strive to build a world free from injustice and oppression.

This will be the most befitting memorial to Ho Chi Minh and Indo-Vietnamese friendship!

The people of India are grateful to you General Giap for having accepted our invitation to come to India where we celebrate this great event. We assure you, General Giap that we shall preserve the heritage of Ho Chi Minh as not only one of Asia's but world's greatest leaders. On behalf of the people of India, I assure you of our fullest solidarity with the people of Vietnam in their efforts to

bring peace and prosperity to their own people, to this region and in the world. Our world needs peace today more than ever. Ho Chi Minh's message of peace through freedom and independence will be a beacon light for ever and ever.

Child Care—a Priority

IT IS MY proud privilege to be with you this morning. For the development of our child and for their better future, we require peace and amity all over the world. But unfortunately again it seems that the humanity has been thrown on the brink of disaster or on the brink of a crisis which I want should end immediately. The situation in the Gulf area is so critical today that we feel sad about the future of the whole humanity and are worried about the future of our children.

Long back, our great philosopher poet, Rabindranath Tagore had said that when a child comes to this world it brings a new hope that God is not totally disappointed about the future of humanity. Though, there are clouds over the future of humanity, children are the hope of tomorrow and that hope gives us the vitality, the strength, and the inspiration to work for the future of the whole humanity.

I am glad that you are engaged in this activity for the development of the children and the expectant mothers. I totally agree with you that unless and until we take care of our womenfolk we shall not be able to take proper care of our children. It has been recognised all over the world that every child learns in the lap of the

mother. Unfortunately, in all the developing countries and more so in our country care has not been taken about the development of womenfolk and this is why we are not able to take care of our children in a proper manner.

Illiteracy is one problem, poverty is another. Poverty and illiteracy go together. It is unfortunate that in spite of all our promises and assurances during the last four decades we have done pretty little for the education of the women and care of the children in this country. I am glad that certain international organisations, and specially organisations like UNICEF, are doing good work for the development of children and are also extending some help for their growth in a proper manner.

But any outside agency cannot help us unless and until we change our minds, change our attitudes regarding their development and regarding our priorities. It is unfortunate that in spite of all our education, high hopes for better future for our children, we have not cared to take it as a priority item in our planning and in our developmental activities. We should try to spare our scarce resources in order to invest in children so that they can build a better future for the whole society. When we talk of investing in men or children we mean that you should take care about the necessary calories so that our children don't go blind because of malnutrition. You should see that our expectant mothers are able to get necessary calories so that they do not produce a disabled child. But if this has to be done we will have to make sacrifices and we will have to take hard decisions in many areas. Whether we are ready for taking these hard decisions or not, will depend on our will to survive as a nation.

I assure you that the government has taken a decision that our first priority will be the child care and the care of our expectant mothers. We made a promise to the nation that within ten years of Independence there will not be a single illiterate individual in this country. But in spite of all our tall talks, more than 65 per cent of people are illiterate and if you go into the women's education that figure will be more than 75 per cent or 78 per cent. I do not know exactly the figures, but if you educate one male child you educate

only one citizen, but if you educate a female child you educate the whole family. So that aspect has to be taken into consideration.

I am glad that some decisions have been taken and certain voluntary agencies are working in that direction. I assure you that though we are a society of scarce resources but we do not have that much paucity of funds or resources that we could not take care of our children. It is only the lack of will power, that we have not been able to do anything more positive, more substantial in this regard.

I hope that given the inspiration from organisations like you, and the support from the international organisations and with the necessary will power we shall be able to have a better performance in this area.

I assure you, that the Government will do everything possible to see that you don't have to give up any programme or project because of paucity of funds. I don't say that there are enormous resources, you know that how much we are constrained in resources and I don't know how much impact this war is going to have on us, but in spite of all these difficulties, I assure you that the Government will do everything within its powers to see that your programmes don't suffer. We have a young man as minister. I hope that he will push forward all your programmes and he will see that your activities get the first priority in the scheme of things in the Government and in the Planning Commission. I have also requested the Planning Commission that child care and the education of women should be our priority items and I hope in the Plan period we shall be able to make a remarkable advance in this direction. I assure you once more of our cooperation. And I hope that you will be able to do something so that we can prove to the whole world that India as a developing nation has taken care of its children. For all times we are not to remain a developing nation, we are bound to be a developed nation with all the potentialities, with all the resources at our command.

Development of Textile Industry

IT IS MY proud privilege to be with you this morning. You are engaged in an activity which is so essential for human needs. After food, clothing is the second problem about which the humanity is concerned. I am also glad that Asia has been the pioneer in textiles for centuries. There have been some ups and downs in the textile industry, but it seems that traditional textile countries like India, China, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and others will lead the world again in textile manufacturing and textile trade. I also know that there are many technical developments and humanity is making strides in this direction. But it is the skill of the people and it is the toiling masses of these areas which is going to determine the future of textile industry. Developing countries will have a great role to play.

I congratulate all of you for organising this Conference and for sponsoring this organisation which is going to play a vital role in the development of textiles in the coming years. I hope and trust that the mutual cooperation between the countries of Asia and the countries which are represented here in this Conference will be a landmark in the development of textile industry.

I know that there are many a problem but these problems have to be tackled with combined efforts of all of you.

This industry is directly linked with agriculture and with the

farming community and upon that depends the future of this nation and many nations of this continent. Agricultural produce is the hallmark of development in this country and unless and until you care for the agricultural development and the uplift of the agriculturists and the farmers, there is no hope for the future. It is the toiling masses who are going to determine the pace of development in this country and all over the world. I hope and trust that there will be close liaison between the farmers and the textile industry so that they mutually cooperate with each other. Upon the prosperity of the farming community depends the prosperity of the textile industry.

I hope that textile industry will take care of the development of the cotton production in this country and try to develop a more close liaison between the farmers and the industry.

Equally important is the satisfaction of the working classes. This is the industry where the largest number of people are employed. If you leave agriculture, textile is the only industry where, in India at least, more people are getting employed. Unfortunately, there have been so many closures and there have been so many sick mills. Efforts of the Government have also not brought very happy results. I am sorry to say that many of the industries in this area are sick industries or they are not in a very good form. We will have to devise a policy or should take some immediate steps so that this industry stands on its own legs.

I shall request all of you, who are engaged in this industry, to have a team of experts so that you could advise the Government as to what steps are necessary to rejuvenate the industry. I assure you that the Government will do everything possible to see that this industry stands on its own legs, makes profits and fulfils the needs of the community because clothing is an area where we should have to pay more attention. I assure you that inspite of all the resource constraints, the Government will do everything possible to see that you get all the assistance, all the help and succour, that is needed to bring the industry on a sound footing.

I hope and trust that this Conference will look into all the aspects of the textile industry, the coordination between the farmers and

industry and the better industrial relations so that everybody finds satisfaction and we will be able to coordinate our activities in such a way that the basic need of our people, that is clothing, is fulfilled and the area where textile industry has been a traditional industry for a long time, will play a determining role in the world economy.

For Peace in the Gulf

I AM DEEPLY distressed that hostilities have broken out in the Gulf in spite of all the efforts made to prevent them. The longer the war lasts, the higher will be the toll in terms of human life and suffering.

I would like to appeal to President Saddam Hussein to announce the commencement of immediate withdrawal from Kuwait, in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolutions. This should be followed by a cessation of hostilities and the resumption of efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. The modalities for it can be worked out by the UN Security Council, which I understand, is already in session.

I have a message from President Gorbachev about the Soviet initiative in this regard, and we will join them in a common endeavour for peace. We will cooperate actively within the Non-aligned Movement and with all like-minded countries in the joint efforts.

Facing the Gulf Crisis

IT IS REGRETTABLE that all efforts to avert war in the Gulf area failed. We made a determined bid to see that war does not take place but unfortunately war has commenced in that area causing concern to all the people in the world and specially to the developing nations. The impact of the war is going to be on all those nations who depend on this area for oil supplies. Indian economy will be badly hit because of the crisis.

We made all possible efforts to see that people realise the consequences of this disastrous step but unfortunately our voice of reason was not heard by others. We tried to make last minute bid to avert war by writing letters to the President of USSR and the President of USA. We also tried to use the good offices of the NAM President, the Yugoslav President, and nothing happened in that **direction**. We are sorry that in spite of all our efforts the war has come.

Indian people will have to suffer because of the dislocation of supply of petroleum products and also because of the increase in prices. But I want to assure our people that we have enough reserves to meet the requirements of the country for the time being. Only if war prolongs for a longer period, we will be hit on that count but we cannot afford the luxury of indulging in waste

because we should conserve every petroleum product to the best of our capacity.

In the last forty years of our Independence, Indian people have always proved equal to the occasion. Whenever the nation faced a crisis, Indian people made the supreme sacrifice to see that dignity, honour and prestige of the nation is maintained. In this period of crisis I again fall back upon the willing cooperation of our people and their sense of endurance, patience and determined action to meet every challenge that comes before us.

It is sad that some nations in the world and some people don't realize that no war has ever a neat ending. Who is victorious today, who is going to be defeated, matters little. Ultimately, it is the humanity which loses. Destruction of human beings, destruction of property and its effect upon ecology and environment is going to be enormous. It is sad that this has not been realized by those who are trying to browbeat each other. And not only that, they have continued a policy of brinkmanship but they have once more forced the whole humanity to the brink of war.

Even after what has happened, it is our constant endeavour that there should be peace and peace should be restored immediately. But, unfortunately, the trend has been of escalating the war. This tendency should be stopped. I appeal to all the concerned people not to escalate the war and try to come to terms so that peace is restored immediately in that area; and then we can think over all other problems in a more calm and cordial atmosphere.

I realize that time has not passed. Even in this hour we should make a determined bid to see that peace is restored in the region. We have special relations, friendly relations with the Arab countries. Our heart goes out to them when we see the devastation and destruction in that area. This is why we are getting in touch with all the leaders of the world to see that something is done to restore goodwill and cordiality in the region. Our immediate efforts should be to restore peace in that area. All other matters can be taken care of subsequently.

I had a long discussion with public opinion leaders in this country and the Indian people are of the view that our first task

should be to restore peace in that area. I had a discussion, a long discussion, with all the Chief Ministers. I was glad that all of them extended their full support and cooperation in meeting the situation. They also assured that we should do everything to see that normalcy is maintained in this country. Unfortunately, there are certain people who try to trade in the misery of the common man. This tendency should be curbed. All profiteers and smugglers and hoarders should realize that this is not the time to make easy money. I would like to appeal to them that they should refrain from such activities. But if it does not happen, we shall have no other option but to come heavily on them. We cannot just tolerate hoarding and profiteering in this situation.

I shall request all the State Governments and also the people that if such tendencies are seen anywhere, they should try to curb it in the very beginning. I hope and trust that people will respond effectively in a determined manner in this effort.

My heart goes to Indian people who are in the Gulf region. Their security and their welfare is our prime concern. We are in constant touch with the Governments in that area and we are monitoring the situation developing in the area of war. In spite of all our efforts some of them will suffer, but the Government will do everything possible to see that their security and their well-being remains the prime concern of the Government. We shall always keep in touch with the people in that area and will communicate to the nation whatever happens in dealing with the problems facing the people of Indian origin in the Gulf region.

I hope and trust that in this hour of crisis people will not take to panic. They will not hear rumours. If rumours are there, you should try to check up whether they are based on substance or they are to create panic among the people.

I am confident that Indian people have got the inherent spiritual strength, and they will have the necessary resilience to rise to the occasion and face this crisis in a determined manner. There are enough stocks of foodgrains and other essential commodities. There is no reason that there should be any rise in the prices. I assure the people that all their basic needs will be met without any

obstruction and if any problem is there the Government has got the capacity, the necessary reserve to meet the situation.

I once more call upon the people, especially the younger people, that they should cooperate in this endeavour by maintaining peace and order in the land. Any differences, small petty squabbles, should be stopped. Any quarrel, any disorder, any law and order problem that is created at this hour of crisis will be against the interest of the nation. I hope and trust that small differences will be relegated to the background and the Indian people will rise to the occasion with unity, cohesion and with determined mind, to face the challenge.

I once more assure you that with the strength of our economy, with the strength of our people, with the willing cooperation of our masses, specially the toiling people working in the fields and factories, we shall come out successful in dealing with the challenge of today.

Restoring Peace in Punjab

I AM HAPPY to visit Chandigarh once again. In the past few years, I have been coming to Chandigarh quite often but today's visit is being made in a changed situation. Many friends have mentioned the difficulties, crises and problems faced by the country. How to solve these? This is the question before us. It is our responsibility to solve the country's problems like poverty, hunger, thirst and unemployment. It is for us to find out the remedy for our malady. Under the democratic set-up, this country is run by you and me. The power to run the country does not reside in Chandigarh or in Delhi. It emanates from and is with the teeming millions—the millions of farmers living in villages, workers residing in *jhuggis and jhopris*. It is in their hands that real power exists. This country will be developed by the courage and imagination of the farmers, the youth, and the toiling workers. It is the duty of the Government to assure workers and farmers that the wealth generated by them will not be spent for the benefit of a handful of people. Instead, money will be spent on the children of the poor, to bring back smile on their faces.

It is our duty to assure the people that national wealth will be spent to fulfil the needs of the common man. We attained freedom 43 years ago but even today, many of our people have to go without bread. Sixty-five per cent of our people are illiterate. Crores and

crores of our countrymen need jobs but they are without employment. They cannot live with dignity. Half of the country's population consists of women. They too cannot live with dignity. They do not get an opportunity to take the country forward. Nor do they get a chance to work for the uplift of the society. The same is happening with the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. And the backward people cannot exercise their rights. Minorities have apprehensions in their minds. They do not feel comfortable.

If we have to find a solution to these problems, the only way is to equitably distribute our limited resources and wealth. There is the ongoing scheme of drinking water supply. We are going to expand it. There are millions of ailing people in our country but they do not get any medical help. We wish that in every village, even in the remotest parts of the country, nobody should die for want of medical care. They must get the required attention. There is already one hospital in Chandigarh. We are planning to have one more hospital in the city. We also feel that Chandigarh should be equipped with facilities to train more doctors so that it could also assist the country in acquiring the services of doctors in a larger number in years to come. Therefore, we decided to have a Medical College here, for which foundation stone has been laid today.

When the nation attained freedom, there were in all 25 Medical Colleges. Now there are 132 Colleges. But even these are not enough for a country of our dimensions which has a population of 80 to 85 crore. Our aim is to provide health and medical care as well as food and drinking water to the people. Let no one feel helpless in this country. Let none create hatred between man and man in the name of caste or religion. None should create discord. If we have to solve problems we will have to cooperate and work shoulder to shoulder. We will have to keep our unity intact.

Punjab and Haryana produce the largest quantity of foodgrains for the country. If the morale of the farmers in Punjab and Haryana wilts, if they do not get fruits of their labour in terms of money, if they do not put their heart in their work, millions in the country will go without food. Hence, we have decided to provide all facilities to our farmers, so that they get adequate return for the

labour they put in. Maximum attention will be paid to agriculture. The Government will give priority to irrigation, supply of improved seeds, fertilizers, etc. Power will also be supplied to the villages on a priority basis. We want our farmers to work according to a plan and move ahead. They should produce more foodgrains. Agricultural produce should not only be enough to meet the needs of the people of our country, but India should be able to export foodgrains to various countries of the world.

Those who are engaged in manual labour should also get due wages. We have crores of people who need employment. If they are to be given employment then we will have to economise our resources. The crying need of the hour is to follow Gandhiji's ideals, adopt economic ways and accept the style of simple living. If our country is poor, we will have to share the poverty. It should not be that the burden of poverty is borne by rikshaw-pullers, labourers, and others who live in *jhuggi-jhopris*. The affluent sections of the society must come forward and share the burden.

We will have to save every paisa, every grain of cereal in order to provide food to the hungry people. Every resource will have to be saved so that we can create new opportunities of employment for them. Stringent economy measures may be necessary to find resources to provide water and power to farmers in villages. To achieve this objective we will have to create a new atmosphere. To wage a successful fight against poverty and hunger, we will have to stop quarelling among ourselves. If we go on fighting in the name of religion, we cannot channelise our energy for development work.

We have a civilization and culture which is thousands of years old. Many great men were born here. The great *gurus* taught us to make sacrifices for the general good. Our sages and seers gave us a new philosophy. Our history is full of the message of love, fraternity and goodwill. All men are equal. There should be no hatred among the people. We will have to end the atmosphere of hate. Should we fight among ourselves for the sake of a temple or a mosque? Should we shed our blood for the sake of a small piece of land? It is said that God does not live either in a temple or in a mosque but He can be found in the hearts of people suffering from

hunger and thirst. We will have to work to remove hunger and provide water to the needy. That will be the real worship of God. If we are to eradicate poverty and hunger, we must end the atmosphere of hatred. The land of Punjab which once echoed with the songs of lovers like Heer Ranjha, where the people danced ecstatically on the beats of Bhangra, is in the grip of violence and bloodshed. The message of the great Guru Nanak is for world peace. It is a message of love and brotherhood. I urge the people to ponder over it. I appeal to the youth of Punjab, to the farmers of Haryana and to the farmers belonging to the land of Nanak to think over what Nanak had said. There was a time when the river of love and affection flowed in this land. Today, this very land is witnessing the spectre of violence everywhere. Nothing can be more shameful for us than this scenario. That is why from the very first day in office we are asking people to end this dance of death and put a stop to the atmosphere of violence. Stop this bloodshed. It is not with the bullet but through the language of love that problems can be solved. That is what we should learn. We should try our best. We must end the deadly atmosphere. Remember, a bullet whether shot by the police or by a terrorist kills a human being, it hurts a human being. Death is death. If a human being dies, a mother loses her son and a sister, her brother. This should not happen. I have attempted to stop it. I urge all of you to join me. Some may oppose it but I would like every youngman of Punjab and Haryana to come forward and join hands to end this situation. I have an open mind and with candour I would like to talk to all. One may be in anguish and he may go wrong. But, if a brother takes a wrong path, shall we turn him out of the house? No, we will not do this. We will talk to him. We will ask him to see reason. We will talk to him through our relatives. We will have to run this nation just the way we run a family. We have no right to doubt anybody's patriotism. We wish to change the present atmosphere. Come forward and join me and help me in changing the atmosphere.

May be, it is not easy to turn hate into love. Many difficulties may be encountered. But those who are scared of difficulties do not make history. If we have to build our future, we will have to forget our recent past. We will have to remove the feeling of hatred and

allow love to take its place. Only then our country will be able to move forward. I invite one and all to join me in this task. Innocents must not die. No revolution can come through murdering innocent people. Such acts will not help the cause of any religion. If the blood of an innocent is shed, it is a matter of great shame for all of us, for our country and for our society. We will have to stop the killings of innocent people. I want to submit with great humility that those who indulge in such killings are the enemies of the nation. I have talked to many people and they are unanimous in their opinion that no innocent person should be killed. They have agreed with my observation that such killers are our foes. Those who shed the blood of the innocents have no love for the country. They have no heart for the countrymen and for such people our hearts also do not go out. They have no place in our minds. I want to state this unequivocally. If the blood of an innocent is shed the government will firmly come down with an iron hand upon the culprits. We will go all out to stop these killings.

We will have to take very stern steps to defend our country, its integrity and unity. Many people indulge in looting, some go in for bank robberies and some are busy in smuggling. These self-styled revolutionaries spoil the atmosphere. As a matter of fact, these people have no connection at all with any movement. May I also request those who are carrying on one or the other agitation to come forward to restrict the anti-social activities of the people of whom I have just spoken.

Today we need unity, restraint and patience. Along with this we also need to start a campaign against those who are killing the innocents. We have asked our police officers and security forces that they should see to it that innocent people are not killed. The police and the security forces should discharge their duty towards the country. I know under what difficulties they are working. They should also observe restraint. At the same time, please remember that those in the police force are no one else but your sons, your brothers. Cooperate with them. Do not obstruct them in the discharge of their duties. They are here to help you; they are here to protect you. Police is not meant to repress you.

While we want peace and security to prevail, we see the clouds of

war hovering over our horizon. In one region war has already started. We have close and friendly relations with the Arab countries for many years now. When we see one man shedding the blood of another we feel extremely unhappy. We are trying our level best to restore peace in that region, that blood is not shed there and that no outside power or people attack them and make their life miserable. I appeal to all the nations of the world and their leaders to restore peace in the region.

Our economic progress is also dependent and related to the Gulf events. In case there is a prolonged war in the Gulf, it will affect our country, our economy. Immediately there may not be any problem. We have large stocks of oil. We have stocks of foodgrains too. But in case the war prolongs it will naturally affect our country adversely. People should not get panicky nor get agitated nor become victims of rumours. I would like to sound a note of caution to the traders and industrialists. If there is a crisis in the world and if that crisis affects our country, do not try to cash on it. We will have to save every paisa, every drop of petroleum. We will also have to save every grain of food. We must be able to assure our people that prices will not be allowed to rise. I want to give my word to the people that in case prices are raised unnecessarily and if some people indulge in hoarding, the government will be compelled to take harsh steps. I trust that the capitalists, industrialists and traders of this country will not force the government to take such steps.

I also trust that every young man in the country, every farmer, every educated person will cooperate with us in this hour of crisis. I am happy that in the past five days or so, I have been able to talk to the leaders of various political parties and the Chief Ministers of States. They are all willing to cooperate and go along with us. Please stop all agitations. Agitations in the name of religion or in the name of caste or for increase in wages should not be launched. Discontinue all these and create an atmosphere of peace and unity. Let us talk among ourselves and find solutions to problems through dialogue. This is the only way to take the country forward.

I trust that the great and highly educated people of Chandigarh would take the lead. With your cooperation we will come out of the

wood, give a shape to our country's future and generate new energy. Let us forge ahead towards a new future. This is my wish. I am sure the country would certainly come out of the present crisis with greater strength and reach greater heights. Let us hope that a bright future awaits us all.

Scientific Research for Better Life

I EXTEND TO you hearty welcome to this country. I am sorry that I cannot remain with you for a long time.

All of you are involved in a research work which is going to benefit the humanity. I wish you all great success.

The situation in the world is getting far worse. We don't know what will happen tomorrow. We only hope that peace will be restored and we shall be functioning in a more cordial and peaceful atmosphere. The humanity again has been forced on the brink of disaster. In spite of all our efforts to see that we are able to create an atmosphere of cordiality and peace in the world, the result seems to be just the contrary.

In this situation I hope that scientists will create an atmosphere where humanity will understand the consequences of this disastrous approach, because it is the scientists who give us the vitality, the strength for development and also provide the means of destruction. The destruction part is that of politicians but the capacity is provided by you. So, I think you will understand your responsibility and create an atmosphere of goodwill because this type of conferences create a forum where we can understand the consequences of our achievements and also the possibility of the

misuse of the scientific researches that are there at the disposal of humanity.

I trust that scientists will be more purposeful in creating an atmosphere of peace and cordiality. They will provide an opportunity to the humanity for making progress and will have a sobering effect on the political atmosphere too. Though it is expecting too much from you but in times of despair and frustration, man clinches to the last straw and this is why I hope that this conference, which goes into the realm of all the possibilities of research for development, will also think about the possibility of how best we can create an atmosphere where humanity can make use of scientific researches for a better, joyous and richer life.

Journalists to Promote Good Causes

IT IS A sacred duty to uncover truth. But sometimes unadulterated truth proves costly to the nation. It takes time to realize that trends in journalism have changed. Indulging in criticism has become a very easy and pleasant job and it is difficult to get over the tendency. However, do not think that those who are in the field of journalism, are very influential in politics.

We forget that there is a great difference between the life of a nation, and that of an individual. An individual may have some depravities which may cause some harm to the society, but no individual can put an end to the society. Even the great men have not been able to do so. They influenced the society of the period in which they lived and left the world. The society did not cease to exist. Those who mould the world do not keep themselves confined to a few individuals. I expect the same from the journalists. I would like them to be known as the makers of the society. It is up to you to decide whether you would like to remain satisfied with criticising the people, pointing out their weaknesses, enjoy the pleasure of disparaging others or you would like to project yourself as the makers of the society by giving a new direction to the country.

When you talk of freedom of Press, I say freedom is absolute and indivisible. If you have freedom to speak the truth, you have equal freedom to tell a lie. There is a quotation by Gandhiji in the paper you have given to me, which reads, "If there is no freedom to make mistakes, then the freedom is meaningless." The freedom of the Press becomes meaningless if a person in authority starts defining what is proper and improper, what is truth and what is untruth. It is enough, if the person in authority knows the difference. Same is true for the members of the Press. My request to you is that the journalists should give due thought to what they write. You may come across interesting news, reporting of it might make you famous for a few days but the same news could harm the society and the country at large. You have to decide whether it is proper to publish such news. We see today that we are not worried about fulfilment of our duties. We want to hide our incompetence in the mistakes of others. Those who are in politics want to build future on the mistakes of the past. A country which wants to keep itself alive on the strength of the past mistakes cannot create history. We have to learn from our past mistakes but should not base our future on them. You have the right to believe that everyone in politics is corrupt and devoid of love for the nation, but why do you want to attribute an individual's faults to the nation? If a man is corrupt do write against him. But you criticise a person because you don't like his face or you have some grudge against him. If this is your standard, I don't know how long you will be able to command the respect of the people. In politics people go out of power very soon but journalists too have their days numbered. Remember whenever freedom becomes licence, it ceases to be freedom in the truest sense of the term.

Justice meted out by history is very cruel which no one escapes, be it, the journalists, the politicians or those who mould the society. History of the world bears testimony to the fact that when one feels omnipotent, power slips out of his hands. No idealism, no ism, no political thought will come to your rescue. Whether you talk of socialism or capitalism whether you talk of freedom or subjugation, result will be the same. History is an ongoing process. If we do not mould ourselves according to its currents we will be swept away. To save us from that fate we have to come out of the

narrow circles of individuals and think about the society as a whole. We have to identify ourselves with the problems. The feeling we have that we can make or mar a person is a false pride. I am not a religious or spiritual person. But I do believe that a power which can mar or make a person is beyond human reach. I do not know what you would like to call that power or how you would describe it. But there is a power which emboldens a small man to confront a dictator. Donkeys graze on the tombs of those who were dictators once. Society will perhaps condone or even respect a person who believes that he is its maker, but history will never forgive him. I do not know whether there is God or not but this much is certain that when an individual has tried to play God history has wiped him out. Neither we nor you should play God.

Let us cooperate with each other. Every human being is full of shortcomings. But every human being is gifted with some powers. Let us try to know each others' strength and help to remove each others' shortcomings. We can't raise ourselves by running down others. If we can cultivate such attitude we will be able to help the society better.

I am confident that in cooperation with each other we will be able to set up a new standard. You are responsible for awakening the society. We have innumerable problems and difficulties. In the last fifty years we have witnessed so many hopes and disappointments—many lofty ideas and many cruel tendencies. I am sure that you will help to promote good causes and try to remove the faults of others.

Love for Lepers

I AM GLAD that you are engaged in social work of such a great magnitude. It is our bad luck that even today there are a large number of lepers in our country. The most distressing thing is that the lepers not only undergo physical and mental agony but are also boycotted by the society. To work for these people is, indeed, a great service. Mahatma Gandhi was the first person who drew our attention to the service of the lepers. It is a matter of shame that even after forty-four years of independence we have not been able to solve this problem. I congratulate you for your dedication, love and sympathy for the lepers. The nation will ever remain indebted to you for the work you are doing.

I am happy to know that the dedicated service of a few persons has been recognised by the international organisation*. I congratulate those friends who have been awarded the prizes. I hope that your example will inspire others to take up the work of leprosy eradication and eventually help the society to get rid of the disease. A leper waits for death and it comes in a gradual manner. To have sympathy and love for lepers is humanism at its best. I

Free rendering of speech in Hindi, to a delegation of Hind Kusht Nivaran Sangh, New Delhi, 29 January 1991

*Dr Kunal Shah and Dr K.N. Rao, members of delegation were awarded International Mitsuda award for their meritorious work in Leprosy.

assure you that the Government will always render all possible help to your good work. I expect, you will expand your activities and help relieve this country of the terrible disease.



Addressing the inaugural session of the SAARC Summit, Male, 21 November 1990



In conversation with the President of Maldives, Mr Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, New Delhi, 25 January 1991



At a joint Press conference with his Nepalese counterpart, Mr Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, Kathmandu, Nepal, 15 February 1991



With the U S Vice-President, Mr Dan Quayle, New Delhi, 24 May 1991



Calling on King Jigme Singye Wangchuck of Bhutan, New Delhi, 24 November 1990



With President Bernard Dowiyogo of Nauru, New Delhi, 1 January 1991



Calling on President Ion Iliescu of Romania, New Delhi, 16 January 1991



With the German President, Dr Richard Von Weizsacker, New Delhi, 1 March 1991

Making People Literate

I FEEL THAT there is enough substance, enough strength, enough vitality in this country and we can make this country a place of glory because our people have got the necessary capacity, capability, intelligence, excellence and they can match anybody in any part of the world. There are people of whose achievements this nation can be proud of. But unfortunately people who have done something more purposeful, more concrete have been relegated to the background. It is not that only those people have been neglected, exploited and oppressed, but also the people who have a free mind, free thinking and who can give new ideas, are equally neglected. One is neglected because he has no voice, the other is neglected because he has the voice. We don't want to hear that voice, the voice of sanity, reason, human compassion, sympathy and understanding. The reasons may be different but the result is the same. A society which neglects its manpower which can work hard and a society which neglects its intellectuals who can give new ideas, new vision—what hope is there for such a society? We should try to bring a fusion between intelligence and the manpower that we have got. This programme of yours is a new venture in that direction. Intellectuals, intelligentia, people of literature, should go to the villages and meet the people who have got everything but

have no ideas, no understanding, and don't know how to do work more purposefully in order to make their life happier and in order to contribute for the development of the country. They are helpless and you are helpless because you have nothing to do if you go on looking towards the Government. I don't know in what context, my friend, Mohan Dharia said that the nation can go on without the Government. The nation can't go on without the Government. One or the other person will be in the Government. We will have to depend upon the Government and let us not have any illusions. If the Government cannot help you, Government can create problems and with all your good intentions you cannot do anything. Revolutions may take place without the Government, but constructive activities cannot be there without the cooperation of the Government. These are two different things. But we should try to see that the Government also doesn't turn a blind eye or a deaf ear to the suggestions that come from persons of your stature. This is what I have come to tell you that this is a new movement. In this movement, I see a new ray of hope, not only to make people literate but to make people realize that they are the arbiters of the destiny of this nation.

This nation does not belong to a few politicians, whether they are the Prime Minister, Ministers, Members of Parliament Members of the Legislatures, but the nation belongs to 850 million people of this country who have today no voice in shaping the destiny of the nation. The future belongs to them. Unless and until we are able to invoke their willing cooperation, there is no hope for the future of this country. And, this is why time and again I go on impressing that try to generate the will-power of the people. Nations are not destroyed by foreign aggressions, nations are not destroyed because of the economic problems, nations are not destroyed by natural calamities; nations are destroyed when the will-power of the people is destroyed. Nations are not built by bullets nor by war.... Bullets may give you Government but Governments don't build nations. A nation is always built by the will-power of the people and that will-power can be generated only when people understand what their place in society is and how they are to compete with the rest of the world in order to have a dignified life. And that can be done only if we are able to make them literate

because without literacy we cannot use the electronic media for making them conscious about their role in reshaping the destiny of this country. So, I request all of you to make a plan.

Every university, every college will take up this programme. Make it a mission. If in one university five students are ready, they will become a nucleus to create a new psychology in that area. So I request you to approach the Principals of different colleges. It is better if all the students, all the teachers do it, but don't get discouraged if all of them don't accept it. Try to find out a few dedicated young men and women and also a few professors who can guide them—that will be the beginning. I hope that if you take this decision, whoever is there in the Government, will have no option but to cooperate with you and I assure you that—I don't know how long I am in this position, but I shall remain a citizen of this country and as a citizen of this country—I assure you of all my support, help, cooperation and services. I have just come to pledge my services to you in this noble task and I hope that all of you together will prepare a programme which will create a new era of confidence, trust and hope for the future of this country.

Everybody is failing, if you all fail, there is no hope, because the academic institutions, the places of learning are the last hope of humanity. Whenever there was darkness in the history of human civilization, a new ray of hope had come from the academic institutions.

In our country, which is a country of old civilization and culture, academic institutions have always given a message of new hope. I hope and trust that India has reached a point which is going to be a turning point in our history and with your blessings, support, cooperation and initiative a new message will go to the people in this country and we shall be able to build a new India.

Democratic Tradition

JUST ABOUT FOUR months back I requested you to join me in the endeavour to find solution of the difficult problems that the nation was facing at that time. There was an atmosphere of mutual distrust, discord, and people fighting with each other. Our streets were the scenes of everyday violence. There was an atmosphere of violence in Punjab. Kashmir was in the throes of agony. There were problems all over the country. At that time, I thought that the atmosphere was not conducive for the mid-term poll and I took upon myself the responsibility to cool down the tempers.

I had no illusion about my capacity but I was sure of your cooperation. I was confident of your help and support and blessings. And, I thought that being given a correct approach the people will respond. I am glad to say that when the appeal was made to them, when we approached them in right earnest, the people responded. I don't say that the problems have been solved. I don't claim that violence has been eliminated from our social life, but the tension has eased to a great extent. People were fighting at that time against each other. Now people have come for a dialogue to understand the meaning of mutual discussion, they have realized that the solution of problems can be found out by debating issues around the table. This in itself is a great change in the climate and the people are feeling that change.

But unfortunately, the basic problems remain. The problem of poverty, the problem of growing disparity, the problem of illiteracy, the problem of disease, the problem of regional imbalances, the problem of feeling of discrimination is haunting the minds of our people. Our Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people feel that they have not been given the opportunity to lead a life of dignity. Our backward class people feel that they are not getting their share from the society. Our minorities feel apprehensive. It is not only in this country, but all over the world. Minorities, whether that of religion or of language or of ethnic considerations, feel abrasive and they feel that they are being discriminated against.

This is why in our Constitution it was provided that we should give special facilities to our minorities. But in spite of all our and in spite of all our assurances, they are not feeling assured that they can lead a life of dignity and honour. It is our responsibility to create a feeling amongst the people who have been so far oppressed, exploited and downtrodden that the society will take care to fulfil their aspirations and urges. Because, if we don't change our attitude towards the aspirations and urges of the poorer sections of the society, the only other course open for us is to use the coercive power of the State to silence them. But it is in not method to be applied in a Parliamentary democracy, and surely not in a country where Lord Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi gave the message of peace and non-violence. Unfortunately, these sections are getting frustrated. And the result is that from Tamil Nadu to Tripura, everywhere tribal belts are under unrest. In these situations, we tried to take some corrective measures because we are a society of scarce resources. We have to decide whether these resources will be spent for the benefit or for the glory or for the pleasure of the chosen few or the same will be deployed for meeting the basic minimum needs of our people. A country where more than 65 per cent of its people are illiterate, where more than 30 per cent of its people are below the poverty line, where millions of our youngmen and women are without jobs, who want to do something for the society, want to produce something and want to lead a life of dignity; but they are being denied this privilege. Austerity is just not a slogan but it is a strategy to generate the will-power of the people.

Societies are changed, nations make progress not by using the bullet to coerce the people nor by using the ballot to get power by hook or crook, but societies are built by generating the will-power of the people. This will-power cannot be generated unless and until we decide to invest in man and to spare our resources for meeting the basic minimum needs of our people.

Time and again I impressed upon the people in this country and especially those who are the privileged that they should understand the dire need of saving every penny in order to meet the basic needs of our people. But it is not an easy task. It is easy to talk about it but very difficult to implement. When certain policy orientations are made, people get panicky and sometimes they become aggressive.

When in last December we took over the Government of this country, we were economically on the brink of disaster. In order to arrest the rot we had to take certain measures. Certain taxes were imposed, of course not on the poorer sections but on the people who are in a position to pay. But they did not take it easy, but I bother about all the agonies of the privileged few, but I feel concerned that many of us who are workers in the political field and many of us who claim to be the arbiters of the destiny of the nation, don't understand the implications of the policies that have been pursued for years in this country. We are responsible for bringing this country on the brink of disaster. I don't want to give you a message of despair. I know the vitality of the Indian people. I know the resilience of our economy. This country cannot be destroyed by the follies and by the mistaken moves taken by the politicians in the past. We can correct the whole situation but for that we require a determined action, a dedicated attempt to see that we address ourselves to the problems of the poor and in that lies the future of this country.

When we deal with the nations of the world, we deal with them on the basis of equality. We have taken a decision that we shall not try to pressurise any small nation but we shall not be pressurised by any big power in this world. This was the position taken by my

Government when we were dealing with the difficult situation in the world. But some people raised hue and cry without any basis. The Government only followed the norms that had been adopted by this country for years together. There was no question of **compromise on our basic principles**. The national interests are always taken into consideration. We cannot ignore the national interest just for giving high-sounding slogans. But these matters can be debated. There can be differences of opinion. But one should always be ready to follow certain norms. In a parliamentary democracy, we have to keep some restraint on ourselves. I am sorry to say that during the last two-three days what happened in the Parliament is shameful and for that I hold myself responsible. Being the Prime Minister of the country, I cannot absolve myself of the responsibility. I depended upon the support and cooperation of certain friends who behaved in a manner which in no way can be considered healthy and decent in democratic traditions, even it is not a civilized behaviour in any democracy.

But yesterday a situation was created. I shall not go into the details of the problem but on a trifle the party that was supporting the Government decided to keep out of the House. You know the President is the custodian of our Constitution. He discharges his constitutional obligation by addressing the nation through the Joint Session of Parliament. It is obligatory on the part of the Government to see that the Motion of Thanks is passed. But a situation was created where it was not possible for me to get that motion passed in the House. Under those circumstances I had no other option but to tell the Speaker that I am going to resign from the Prime Ministership of this country.

I know that a constitutional crisis has been created because of the irresponsible behaviour of certain people. For the last one week or so, I was discussing this with my colleagues. Many of my friends and colleagues were annoyed over it. But I said that it is not the question of self-respect of an individual, it is the question of respect of the whole nation, it is the question of dignity of the office of the President, it is the question of observing norms of the Constitution. So, we had no other option but to exercise self-restraint. And, under that self-restraint, we tolerated everything. But the situation

became impossible because the Parliamentary democracy is the game of numbers. We could not have created numbers. Under these circumstances, I resigned from the Prime Ministership.

The President is finding out the ways how to get over the constitutional crisis that has been created because of the irresponsible behaviour of certain persons of certain political group in the Parliament.

But we should not despair or get frustrated. Situation is bad today but there is enough scope for changing the situation. And the ultimate decision is that of the people. This was the lesson given to us by Mahatma Gandhi. This was the message given to the young people by Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan when he said that the real power is with the people. Now the people have to decide what course the history will take in this country. If you want to give a new course to history, you should make a determined bid. The young people should come forward and organise themselves because this nation does not belong to a few politicians who hold high offices. This nation does not belong to the Prime Minister or the persons who aspire to be Prime Minister. This nation belongs to 850 million people of this country.

And this is why I have come to you. In the last four months, I have come to understand that we have a system which can tide over all the crises. We have a bureaucracy upon which we can depend. There has been a tendency among the people, especially those who are the politicians, to pass on every responsibility to the bureaucracy. During the last four months, it is my experience, I may say without being contradicted, that bureaucrats are one of the most patriotic sections of our population. They can give advice but politicians try to use them to fulfil their whims. Our economy has got enough resilience. I know our nation has been bestowed by the nature with enormous wealth. Our manpower is there. Our managers, our workers in the public sector and the private sector, our bureaucracy is par excellence. I think that if we mobilise all these resources with a determination, that is not for our personal ambition but for the good of the nation which is our goal, then I think we can retrieve the situation.

I hope and trust that people will not get frustrated. I assure friends that if there are problems, those problems can be sorted out. Problems can be sorted out by mutual discussion. This is why I made an appeal to discard the path of violence. Don't go for killing each other, come for mutual discussion, debate and I can claim with certain amount of satisfaction that during the last three-four months, the situation has changed, people are ready to talk, people are ready to discuss, people are ready to cooperate with each other to find solution of the difficult problems.

But this atmosphere has been vitiated by the irresponsible behaviour of certain people. Under the circumstances, I think there is no other choice but to come to you to get your help and support in order to clear the confusion that has been created. I hope that people will understand their responsibility and they will respond in order to find solution of these problems.

I assure you friends that I am quite confident about the future of this country. I am optimistic because the people of this country are the strength of today and they are also the hope of tomorrow. Upon their shoulders lies the future of tomorrow's India. Let us look forward for a brighter and glorious future. I hope and trust that in the coming few days, the President who is the custodian of our Constitution will find solution to the constitutional problem and the people will be called upon to give their judgement on the present situation.

I thank you all for the cordiality and the affection you have shown to me wherever I went in this country.

I wish you very best future. Thank you.

Asia Pacific Cooperation

IT IS GOOD of you that you have come together to consider the problems of this region, especially with a view to cooperate with each other for the economic development in this area.

The situation in the whole world is changing very fast. The year 1990 has been a year of fast changing world. In the very beginning, if you had seen, the people were going for reconciliation and trying to cooperate with each other with a view to have a steady progress in the world and we looked forward for happier days. But all of a sudden in the last part of 1990 and in early 1991, not only tensions increased but we witnessed a very tragic war in the Gulf area.

The situation has changed in the Eastern Europe. Relations within the European community have also changed. The developments in the Soviet Union have their far-reaching impact not only on the politics of the world but also on the economic relations between various nations of the world.

We must always keep in mind that a nation of India's size cannot always depend upon outside help. I have been emphasising this point time and again—that we want very close cooperation with our neighbours and also all other nations of the world—but,

basically, India will have to solve her problems on its own. That is why, not because of doctrinaire approach but from a practical point of view I emphasise all the time that we should learn to live within our means. It is no use trying to imitate the developed world when we are having scarce resources in this country.

Fortunately, or unfortunately whatever you may say, we have a democratic system. In a democratic system, you cannot ignore the urges and aspirations of the common man... This is a country where more than 35 per cent of its people, according to the Government statistics, are below the poverty line, where more than 65 per cent of the population is illiterate, where people do not get elementary health services, where millions of our young men and women do not get jobs because we are not able to provide them the opportunities. This question becomes all the more difficult because we cannot keep the people quiet for a longer time. You talked of the backward classes, you talked of the people who have been neglected so far; these people want to have their place in history, to get something from the society, to contribute to the society by working hard. But if they feel that their work does not bring any prosperity or happiness to them nor any hope for their next generation, I don't think they are going to wait for long. Poverty in itself is a curse, but relative poverty becomes unbearable and it is because of the tensions that are created by the relative poverty that revolutions take place or the societies suffer from instability, chaos, violence and all kinds of maladies which the world has been witnessing all the time.

This serious problem has to be addressed to ourselves. So, first we in India and all other developing countries or the poorer countries, will have to learn how to live within our means. It is true that in today's world we cannot ignore the cooperation and help from outside... We will have to depend upon our neighbours. This is why this Conference becomes more significant. Countries of the Western world are involved in their own problems. Europe is coming to a new type of understanding. This is happening because the Gulf countries are going to take a new shape—I don't know what shape they will take—but again, the people from the West will like to invest more in the Gulf countries; and European countries

will like to look towards the problems of the Soviet Union and other areas of the COMECON countries.

In this situation, the cooperation between the Asian countries becomes all the more essential because if there are regions of economic cooperation, why should Asia lag behind, why should we not take steps in order to understand each other's problems and try to help each other? We are not that helpless. If we cooperate with each other, if we work in coordination and in a cohesive manner, we can not only contribute to solve each other's problems but we can play a meaningful role in the world economy and also in world politics.

This is why I feel that your deliberations this morning will be of far-reaching impact. When we, the SAARC countries met at male, this point was debated at length and it was agreed that there should be cooperation within the SAARC countries. I know that nothing much could be achieved during the last two-three months, but a spirit of cooperation was there, an indication was there, a tendency, an intention was there. We should know whom to cooperate with. Countries of the Third World, who are poor, I don't talk of Japan which is almost a developed country, cannot afford to have confrontation all the time.

This is why I have been saying that we should know how to live in peace and have cordial relations with each other. We cannot afford to quarrel, on every point. We have to develop the areas of agreement. And, when I talk of developing the areas of agreement, it is true of this country also. This is why, I said that we should not try to alienate any section of our population. There are people who feel apprehensive about their future, they feel that they have been neglected for a long time by the society, that they have been discriminated because of their religion or because of their caste or because of the time-old traditions which are obsolete, that they are not getting the opportunity to lead a life of dignity; we have to assuage their feelings. We have to assure them that they are equal partners in the development of the country and they are going to be the beneficiaries of the fruits of development. This assurance we have to give in our own country. And simultaneously, we have to assure our neighbours who are small, who are not as

technologically developed, that we don't want to impose our will on them. They have to decide about their future. We have to cooperate with them. Similarly, we would like to have the cooperation of other nations who are more developed or who are more fortunate. But the cooperation is essential if we want that humanity should live in peace, in prosperity, in progress and without any tension. Tensions are bound to mount if there is discrimination, if there are imbalances whether within the country or outside the country.

If the developed countries of the world feel that they can impose their will upon the smaller nations—temporarily it may be possible because it is always possible for the stronger nations to impose their will on the poorer nations—but it will not give stability, it will not create an atmosphere of cordiality, peace and progress. This is why I think that we should try to create an atmosphere of cooperation, of goodwill, of helping each other.

I hope and trust that all of you who are the leaders—by leaders, I don't mean political leaders; leaders in the economic field, in the field of industry—will consider the problems of humanity as a whole. In this country for ages we have been taught that it is not by segmenting the humanity but by trying to create human brotherhood that we can find the solution to the problems of the world.

I hope that this Conference will be a beginning for understanding each other's problems and extending cooperation in the areas wherever it is possible. I assure you that we in India shall do everything possible to see that Asian countries come closer not only for helping each other economically, but that politically also we are able to play a meaningful role. This is the land of Lord Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi, who have given the message of peace, human brotherhood and cooperation. Why should India and other nations of Asia not be proud of their heritage and try to play their role again to give a new lead to the whole humanity for mutual cooperation, goodwill, peace and tranquility?

I thank you all for inviting me and for giving me this opportunity to come to you just to make an appeal to you. I have not come to

give a sermon. As a political worker I look towards you with expectation and hope that perhaps with your endeavour, with your discussions, we can find a new ray of hope of mutual cooperation and better understanding.

Writers—the strength of the Nation

I FEEL PROUD on being told that Publications Division of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting tops the list of organisations which encourage writers and poets. I congratulate the officials of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for setting up such a tradition.

I believe that the journalists, writers, artists and poets constitute the strength of the nation. It is a strength which does not wane with the passage of time, it remains intact despite the rise and fall of nations. Their pen has the power to bring alive the achievements of the past and visualize the future. Bharatendu Harishchandra in whose name, the award is being given today was one of those great men who had known the trends of the times a century earlier. He had understood the woes of India. The violation of the dignity of mother India made him unhappy. Without that perception he could not have written satirical tales of British Darbar or sarcastically described the sad plight of the unemployed. I am very unhappy that we have forgotten our learned men. We have failed to place their writings before the present generation. It is not because we do not have resources, it is because we do not have the will-power. We are so much occupied with modern progress, that we think it is our duty to forget the past or we think that whatever we

had in the past, was all traditional and that is irrelevant today. We feel that we can't make progress with those ideals. We are so much overwhelmed by the prosperity of others that we have become incapable of accepting what was good and of permanent value in our culture and civilization. A country or community which is not able to preserve its achievements can never progress. It is not the duty of the Government or those who are in power to preserve such works. But it is the duty of the scholars and writers who lead ordinary lives to immortalize our past achievements with their pen. India's literary works were never written in palaces nor were they written by the kings. They were written in jungles. Our literature is an expression of our woes whether it is *Vedas* or Tulsi's *Ramayana* or Valmiki's *Ramayana*. A history of our failures is the history of our development. Those who accept failures and learn from such failures, inspire others to achieve success. They are in true sense, the builders of society and our poets, writers and artists belong to that category.

I believe that by honouring writers, we honour our achievements for which our coming generation would feel proud. Among the prize winners is Prabhakarji—an old man who has inspired our youth to go ahead in the world. It is my bad luck that I am not familiar with the works of other prize winners. I expect that the Secretary will give me the books of the persons whom I have given the prizes. I would like to go through these inspiring works of literature.

At times one experiences strange things. In 1975 during emergency I was in Patiala Jail. There I came across a torn old book of Bharatendu Harishchandra. I was surprised to learn from that book that **Bharatendu Harishchandra had visited Ballia**. In an address to the youth there he had said that they would have no future, if the country loses its identity. I trust that today's writers, artists and youngmen will sacrifice everything to defend the pride of the country. There is no need for dismay, a country where Bharatendu was born, will never die.

A few days ago I had visited Poona Engineering College. The principal there expressed the hope that someday his college would produce nobel laureates. My reply was that I would no doubt be

happy if the college produced nobel laureates, but more than that you should be proud that persons like Tukaram and Gyaneshwar could be born only in Maharashtra, whereas nobel laureates can be born in any other country. A person like Bharatendu could be born only in India. Jainji and Prabhakarji, you are the links of that ancient traditions of ours. It is the duty of the nation to honour such links and I as Prime Minister pay my respect to all the writers and poets. Our biggest achievement would be to help all those who have won the prizes, and also those who have not but are still striving to get them, to give them recognition and respectful position in the society and assure them a bright future.

I again thank you for giving me an opportunity to meet the writers. Tulsidas has said that company of the holymen even for a fraction of a minute washes away millions of sins.

In the Service of Handicapped

WE HAVE GATHERED here to greet those who are engaged in the service of the helpless and the handicapped. Helping such people is the best service, a man can render to humanity. It is true that in modern times the handicapped persons have to face many difficulties in performing their daily chores. A man has many latent talents and no one knows which one will become active and when. So a man who is handicapped either with impaired legs or arms or speech or eyes should not feel helpless. Scientists all over the world have agreed that no human life is meaningless. There is a hope till a man breathes his last that some day he would be able to contribute something which would transform the society. No one is complete. We all have some shortcomings. It is our duty to help those who are born with some shortcomings. Our Constitution has provided that the handicapped are the special responsibility of our Government.

Mr President, you are the custodian of our Constitution. We hope that you will help promote those activities which our Constitution is committed to promote. Your presence here will inspire those who are doing this immensely useful work for the society. It is true that during the last few years we have made some progress in this direction. It is also true that Government and the society have become aware of the problems of the handicapped.

Free rendering of speech in Hindi, delivered at the National Awards distribution function 1991 for helping the handicapped, New Delhi, 17 March 1991

However, I feel sorry to say that we have been able to help only ten per cent of the handicapped. Despite all our efforts and resources of the Government, ninety per cent of the handicapped still remain neglected and uncared for. It is our primary duty to attend to them. I hold those in high esteem who are getting awards today. I do hope that the awards will inspire others to tread their path so that not a single handicapped person is deprived of assistance and protection.

It is true that with the progress of science, new methods have been found to help the handicapped and their number too has come down considerably. The tragedy with us is that in India the handicapped are the symbol of helplessness. Many children become handicapped because of hunger and lack of medical facilities. Lakhs of our mothers give birth to handicapped children because they do not get nutritious diet. We have to adopt new economic and social policies to create a society where every one gets basic necessities and good, nutritious food. But as long as such a society is not formed we have to help the handicapped. There have been immunization programmes and many similar activities, but still leprosy is wide-spread in our country. One gets shivers at the thought that a large number of people become handicapped because of leprosy. With the increase of health services, man's life span has also gone up. The helplessness of the aged is another challenge for us. We have not done anything to help the old people to lead a happy and peaceful life. We have to do something for them too.

I am sure that those organisations and individuals who are working in this field will plan out a scheme to prevent children from becoming handicapped and also to channelize the talents of the handicapped into activities which will be helpful to the society. I congratulate those who are to get prizes from the President today. I expect that others too who are present here would feel inspired by them and lead the activities of providing assistance to the helpless.

A service to Humanity

I FEEL HONOURED for having been invited by the Institute to welcome the President. I congratulate those young men and women who have gained knowledge and who by their dedication and devotion to duty have given a new hope to the country and vowed to serve it.

Today's young men and women are our strength. They are going to make a new India. Human beings suffer from many ailments. We had dreamt of a society free of ailments. A short while ago the Director of the Institute had reminded us that in the early days of Independence we had hoped that in a few years' time we would be able to serve and console anyone who was ill. We are still far away from that goal. Our poor country is not able to provide medical assistance to the crores of its suffering population. It is a matter of shame that millions of our brethren die for want of medical treatment. It is a sad thing that we are still helpless. A heavy responsibility is awaiting those young men and women who on finishing their studies have received degrees. Our poor country has spent a big chunk of its resources to help you in your studies. Forgive me if I remind you that you are that privileged class whom the society has provided the facilities to study, sometimes even depriving itself of many of its basic necessities.

I am very happy to know that the students who have passed out from this Institute have earned name not only in India but all over the world. I congratulate them. However, I would like to remind you that our suffering brethren are expectantly looking upto you. I am sure that after leaving this Institute you will not forget your duty towards them. You have to take an oath that you will use your knowledge, not for your own progress, not for your happiness, not for earning money but for helping other people. I am sure that the oath you have taken is not just a formality. You will imbibe the true spirit of the oath in your life.

Mr President, I am sure you will guide us to achieve the goal of our independence, which is to help our suffering brethren and work for a happy, prosperous and egalitarian society. Your teaching will enable our young men and women to work for a new and bright future. I wish that our country whose civilization and culture dates back to thousands of years will again have a bright future. I have full faith in our future and that is based on the young men and women, coming out of the technical institutions. Professionally, they can occupy pride of place anywhere in the world.

No one can stall death. But you have the ability to give relief from pain. In the battlefield no doctor makes distinction between a friend and a foe. You remove the sufferings of all. Yours is the only profession which makes no distinction between man and man. Humanity should come forward once again and we should sympathise with our suffering fellow beings and try to alleviate their suffering. A message should go from this Institute that every doctor should come forward to relieve the sufferings of his brethren and the message should be carried by those young men and women who have received degrees and medals today. That is my hope.

Journalism with a Sense of Restraint

YOU HAVE HONOURED me by inviting here. You have mentioned about the difficulties of journalists, which I sincerely feel, are genuine and I am also little worried about those. But I have my own problems. A number of assurances have been given to you within the last few days—on what basis, I do not know. So I cannot comment offhand, whether these assurances are justified or not. I do not know on what basis I could fulfil those assurances. However, I would certainly say that your difficulties should be looked into. There are some difficulties which can be solved, while there are others which have a bearing on the problems of the society, such as danger to your life.

You cannot remain untouched by the anarchy, instability and violence in the country. I would say that you are the first to be affected. Whenever there is a disturbance, you are the first to reach there, so you run the maximum risk. That is a professional hazard. However, whenever any member of your profession is hurt, he should get necessary assistance. For that the Government should make some provisions, so also the employers. I feel that the Government will be able to do something in this connection if you give concrete suggestions. If you want that such help should come from the owners of the newspapers then we have to make them

frame certain rules and regulations. That could be discussed and some way could be found out.

I believe that journalists enjoy freedom of speech. It is, therefore, very difficult for me to give you any advice and especially in the capacity of Prime Minister. That will be tantamount to curtailment of your freedom.

I am not a journalist myself but I have many journalist friends. Upendra Vajpeyiji is here. He is an old friend. When I was a novice in politics, he was a well known journalist. He tried all his tricks on me. However, he did not succeed in his efforts to extract anything from me at that time. The journalists are worried about freedom of speech. At the same time they are equally determined to cling to some of their die-hard convictions. I would like them to pay some attention to what they write. Frankly speaking, some of the things which appear in daily newspapers make me laugh, for example reports such as, 'Prime Minister met a particular person and had a talk with him for two hours.' In fact I have not seen that man for months. Isn't it the duty of the journalist concerned to verify the facts from my office or get confirmation from me?

I will tell you of an incident which occurred today. We have an officer who had filed a case in the court. I can talk about it as the judgement has been delivered. Two or three newspapers reported on front page with banner headlines that P.M. had called for the files to help this officer. What was reported was a hundred per cent lie. I have never felt the need to go through those files which were mentioned in the newspapers. Now if you try to convince me that journalists are impartial and future of India is safe in their hands, how could I believe it? I would keep quiet out of fear of being maligned but certainly bear grudge against them that these were the same journalists who tried to malign me.

When I talk to you about the problems of the country, you think that is not news. But if I criticize someone then it becomes big news. Whenever a senior officer or Minister visits a foreign country, it is customary to write a letter to the Head of the State or head of the Government of that country. Our foreign secretary was to visit a few countries. I, therefore, wrote letters to those countries and as

formalities demand, added one or two things as diplomatic pleasantries. Our former Finance Minister gave a statement that by writing such letters I have lowered the prestige of the country. I am sorry to say that all the newspapers published the statement with a double column headline without consulting the Prime Minister's office. I want to ask you, whose good are you doing? Whose honour are you upholding? Whose prestige are you lowering? However angry you may be with an individual, whatever complaints you may have against him, but playing with the honour of the nation is neither journalism nor freedom of the Press. I do not understand why the journalists behave in this fashion? There is something wrong somewhere. I have been asked why don't I give a befitting reply to the concerned journalists. The reason is that the country is not going to benefit if I stoop down to their level. The newspapers will have one more sensational news to give.

Today's so-called journalism is a competition among those who can run down persons, indulge in their severe criticism and malign them. In 1953-54, I became acquainted with journalists like Chalapati Rau, who is no more and Upendra Vajpeyiji. They were very upright and followed a code of conduct. I have heard and seen well-known journalists arguing over small things such as, "Why are you doing this? Tell me the reason. You are wrong." These days we don't come across such things. These days, to write a sensational story on anyone is journalism. There are people who will put up with such stories but there might be others who would react and you won't like that.

Please bear in mind that you should be as careful of the psychological effect of your writings on other persons as you are of your own problems. Every individual cannot put up with the problems. Every individual cannot put up with the criticism with patience and self-control. For doing so a large measure of self-confidence is required. A person who wants to see his name in the newspapers and finds his name maligned, will certainly flare up. I am sorry to say that you are greatly responsible for creating mafias. You hurt a person so much that he loses his patience and self-control. You have to change your norms. Politicians indulge in mutual conflict, rivalry and they have a tendency to disparage

others rather too much. You please keep away from such tendencies. No nation has kept itself alive by gloating over the shortcomings of others. Nations survive because of their inherent strength. I appeal to the journalists that they are welcome to ventilate the shortcomings of others but whenever there is something good in them please mention that too. Let people not think that they are surrounded by darkness and there is no way out.

You have pen in your hand. You have the strength to arouse the people and give them direction. We have already had much more than our fair share of pricking others to pieces, criticising each other and finding faults with the country. Now, look for what is good in the country. There is no dearth of it. There is no dearth of goodness in any country of the world and they too have journalists.

CNN is very much talked about these days. Did they show everything that happened during the Gulf War? No, they showed only those things which did not go against their country. One of our journalists got the information that we were refuelling the American aeroplanes. He immediately gave it in newspapers with a banner headline. This generated so much fear that the next day the entire Ministry of External Affairs came to me and said, "See this report, what will we say when journalists ask us?" I said, "Tell them we are fuelling the American aeroplanes." Had I said that the newspaper report was baseless, some journalists would have printed a photograph of the American planes, the other would have reproduced entries from the registers of Indian Oil confirming their claim. These kind of things would have continued for fifteen days. We have not done anything wrong. We could have refuelled the American aeroplanes at the airforce aerodromes if we wanted to hide what we did. I had agreed to refuel American aeroplanes after giving due thought to it. What I have done was for the good of the country. I don't say I don't make mistakes.

The conditions are very difficult these days. It is difficult to take right decisions, it is even more difficult to say right things. I can't tell you what I have done because I know you won't evaluate me objectively but you will do so on the basis of your beliefs. Do criticise me for what I have done but to exaggerate it is not your sphere—that is not journalism and that does not mean freedom of

the Press. If we want to minimise our problems we have to find solutions. Solutions can be found in an atmosphere of co-operation. Criticism, confrontation and finding faults with each other won't solve the problems. If there are no solutions to the problems there will be anarchy and violence and the country and its people would suffer most. Journalists should not allow such things to go on at least for the sake of self-preservation which is the first basic instinct of human beings. I appeal to you, if not for the society but for your self-preservation, not to encourage such tendencies.

Augmenting Agricultural Production

WHEN I WAS asked to be present in this international conference, I thought it my responsibility and duty to come to welcome you all here, especially friends from outside India. I know that all of you are engaged in a very important task and that is important not only for this country but for all the developing countries in the world.

In spite of our Green Revolution and all the technology that we have given to our farmers, more than 45 per cent of the agricultural produce is still obtained from the rainfed areas. This is the situation in this country; and in spite of all our efforts to conserve all our water resources, we shall have to depend in a big way in the coming years or decades on rain.

I know that we have enough water resources but to channelise it is a difficult task—difficult task not from the point of view of technology but because of the scarcity of water that we have been facing in this country and perhaps we will be facing that for quite some time to come. I know that there have been many schemes, grand ideas, given by our scientists in the past. They claim that if we are able to channelise all the river resources in our country we can make the whole land green and irrigated, but I don't know when that idea will take shape. We cannot wait that much because while

the food production is growing, simultaneously our growth of population is not only competing with the food production but is excelling it and that is a sad part of our national life. But this is the reality. These two things are interlinked—because of economic backwardness we are not able to meet the basic needs of our people. Neither we are able to give them elementary education nor we are able to provide them primary health services. Without education, it is not possible to motivate people for birth control and also without primary health services you cannot give them a sense of security that the children that are born will survive and will remain healthy. It is a vicious circle. In that vicious circle we have to live according to the situation in which we are and for breaking that, all of us have to play a great role.

I know that agricultural universities and agricultural scientists in this country have contributed a lot during the last two or three decades but we have much to achieve because we have barren lands. We have lands which can be transformed into fertile areas but for that not only the technology is needed, the will power is also needed to mobilise the manpower resources in order to work hard. Also, it is essential that whatever technologies, you have developed, whatever scientific achievements have been made by our agricultural institutes, should reach the people.

I know that a lot of extension work has been done by the agricultural scientists in the universities, and also by the voluntary agencies and they are doing excellent work. But in a vast country like India, every problem, even a small problem becomes very difficult.

Yesterday, the whole morning I was flying over the deserts of Rajasthan and it was a pathetic site to see miles and miles of tract without a single tree or without any greenery. I don't know how far or how long will it take to make that land more inhabitable for the people and also for the animals of the area. But I think that whatever is being done through you and the society which is encouraging our scientists, will get all success. I assure you that however limited resources the nation may have at its disposal, it is our responsibility, it is our duty to give the highest priority to this sector of our economy because it is going to be the dominant sector

not in terms of producing wealth but in terms of meeting the basic minimum needs of our people. Most of the poorer sections of our society who are going to be the determining factor of tomorrow's India live in these areas about which you are concerned.

One may not understand the importance of this area on the basis of economic consideration, but if social and psychological factors are taken into consideration, this area is one of the most vital areas of our economic development and also of our national concern. Unfortunately, in our country even after the Independence, we have not been able to take into consideration the psychological factor that contributes to the wealth and development of the nation because no other resource is there which can contribute for the production but only the manpower. If it is not used, then we cannot hope for a better future for this country and manpower has certain limitations. If you are not able to satisfy them that whatever toils they make that will bring results commensurate with their arduous work—they don't get inspired. If you provide them certain facilities or you give them certain assurances for their hard work they generate a certain type of will-power and that results into more production.

People have been talking about putting in more labour, to the people who have not got the benefit of the development and this dichotomy has created tension in the society. False promises and shattered hopes are the problems of this country. People are getting frustrated and despaired. The result is development of social tensions. I hope and trust that you will not only endeavour to produce more for ensuring satisfaction among the people but would take it as a challenge to keep the democratic set-up going. Democracy depends upon the willing cooperation of the people. Willing cooperation can be had only if we are able to assure the people that their labour will not be wasted—and that it will bring joy and happiness to their children.

In this great endeavour you are contributing a lot. So, I salute you, all the scientists in the agricultural field who are doing this noble job and rendering yeoman service to the nation. I hope that with your knowledge, dedication, and spirit of cooperation with the poorer sections of the society, we shall be able to tide over the

present crisis and we will be able to kindle a new hope, a trust, and a faith among the people upon whose shoulders, the future of tomorrow's India will be built. I salute you as the builders of tomorrow's India with the confidence and hope that you will play your part in an effective manner and in this task I assure you of our cooperation and support.

Building a Better Future for Mankind

I HAVE BEEN deeply moved by your words. They have brought us closer to the stirring changes taking place in Hungary and other European countries. We are reminded of our own efforts at nation building in the early years of our independence. Those were the years of awakening and exploration; of people working to find their own destiny.

We are, indeed, fortunate, that the Indira Gandhi Memorial Lecture this year should be delivered by a respected leader of your stature, who shares a commitment to the ideals of national dignity and freedom which Indira Gandhi held dear. She had a special affection for Hungary and its people and made a valuable contribution to the development of closer ties between our countries and peoples.

Your visit to India is of special significance. Yours is the first state visit by a leader from one of the countries of Central Europe after the historic democratic revolutions which have transformed Europe recently. We welcome you as a true friend of India with whom we have shared very close ties of solidarity and support for over three decades. We admire your courage of conviction and your broad humanist outlook. Your life and work represent the rare synthesis between the courage and daring of a man of action

and sensitivity and perceptiveness of a man of letters.

We share in the joy of the Hungarian people at the fulfilment of their democratic aspirations. We admire the peaceful, constructive and consensual manner in which these changes have been effected in Hungary. We also welcome the improvements in the International situation and the progress in the East-West relations which have facilitated this process.

For the first time, since the Second World War, there is hope that the fractured continent of Europe will be able to overcome its cold war divisions and move towards the vision of a common European home. These events have vindicated the basic tenets of non-alignment and the principles of *Panchsheel* espoused by Jawaharlal Nehru and other Indian leaders. These principles continue to guide us even today. We stand unequivocally committed to the principle of the sovereignty of all nations. We remain firmly convinced of the imperatives of peaceful coexistence. We are opposed to the use of force in settling international disputes. We firmly believe that the people must be the paramount force in deciding the destiny of their nation.

There is a close bond of friendship between India and Hungary. The contacts between our two peoples through the ages have been mutually enriching and have left a lasting impact. Csoma de Korosi journeyed on foot from Hungary to India in the early years of the 19th century and spent 20 years here. His works are of great significance even today for Sanskrit and Buddhist studies. Rabindranath Tagore was overwhelmed by the affection and warmth of the Hungarian people. Planting a linden tree in 1926 near lake Balaton, he wrote:

I am planting this tree in remembrance of my stay here, for nowhere else was I given what I received here. It was more than hospitality. It was the awakening of the feelings of kinship. I sense that I have come to the land of a nation which is emotionally akin to India.

Our links with Hungarian revolutionaries and reformists have been an additional factor bringing our people closer. With your visit, our bonds of friendship are renewed and I am sure, will gain in strength still further.

Today, the traditional empathy between us has grown stronger through our shared contemporary ideals of peaceful coexistence and mutually beneficial cooperation. I am confident that our relations will acquire a new dynamism in the coming years. The emergence of multi-party democracy in Hungary provides a strong new bond between our two peoples. The social changes under way and the increasing emphasis on a mixed market economy in Hungary open new possibilities for enhancing our economic and technical interaction. This also affords greater opportunities for exchanges between our peoples.

We are, today, at a turning-point in history. The cold war has abated. The developments in Central and Eastern Europe have strengthened democracy the world over. Integrationist trends in several parts of the world have underlined the essential oneness of our world, and the interdependence of its parts. Technology is expanding and developing at a remarkable pace, transcending national frontiers. Yet, at the same time, the problems of poverty and underdevelopment remain acute. This is the challenge we must meet together. This is the challenge to which we must address ourselves as one human family. We believe that all countries should strive to consolidate the positive trends in the world, to forge a common front to deal with the common problems of mankind. We believe that we must cooperate to build a better future for all our peoples. India and Hungary must work together in this task.

I thank you once again for sharing with us your experiences and insights. They have given us a deeper understanding of the exciting changes taking place in Europe; changes which have radically transformed the world situation today and will have a lasting impact on the future.

Mr President, I welcome you in this country as a leader of the resistance movement because it is the protest movement that brings prosperity and glory to the human civilization. At every hour of gloom and darkness there stands a man who says 'NO' against the powers that are there at the time. When humanity is suffering from oppression, exploitation and injustice, there should be a person to say 'NO' and this protest movement is the essence of progress.

At a crucial time of history in Europe, you learnt how to say 'NO', whether you believe in one ideology or the other; ideological grounds are not going to give us any help if we are not expressing the urges and aspirations of the people. **Whether a Chaucescu or a Marcos**, the destiny is the same if you don't represent the aspirations and urges of the people of your country.

You are leading a movement in a part of the world which is uniting today and I hope that a united Europe will not only represent the aspirations and urges of the people of that area, but you as the leader of a resistance movement will also understand the aspirations and urges of the developing world. I look towards you to be the leader of that movement. Let us hope that a united Europe will not create a new society for themselves alone, but will also consider the aspirations and urges of the developing world. And, I hope that you will take a leading part in that movement.

I salute you as a leader of the resistance movement and I have great expectation from you as you symbolise the aspirations and urges of the whole humanity which is oppressed and exploited today.

Better Deal for Working Class

IT IS MY proud privilege to welcome you, the President of India, who is not only the custodian of the Constitution but also the head of our family, the great Indian family.

Our biggest asset is the manpower and only with the cooperation, help and support of the manpower, we can think of a better future, a glorious future for this nation. Our working class has been contributing for the creation of more wealth. But, unfortunately, we have not been able to pass on the fruits of their labour to their children—a future, glorious, better and a happier.

There is a sense of despair and frustration among them. But I feel that we have to reassure them that the fruits of their labour will create a new future for the coming generation, especially of the deprived sections or the oppressed sections. It is unfortunate that those who create wealth are not the beneficiaries of development. Because of the scientific developments, because of new innovations, man's drudgery has been reduced. But risk and adventure has increased. Our workmen are working in difficult situations. In many areas they are risking their lives.

Safety and security is the essence of today's working conditions. We are trying to provide all the essential safeguards in order to ensure that our working force remains secure and safe. But in spite

of all this there are at times happenings and incidents which are beyond our control and many of our young men suffer because of those accidents in industrial organisations, especially which belong to the miners.

I trust and hope, Mr President, that your presence here to give away awards to those persons who have done noble work in this field will inspire them and give them a new confidence. It will give them a new encouragement to work hard, to care for not only their own safety but also the safety of their colleagues and comrades who are working together. Your presence here, Mr President, is a source of inspiration to all of us.

I assure you, sir, that under your guidance, under your inspiring leadership, the working class of this country is determined to bring a better tomorrow for this land and let us hope that with their cooperation, with their support, with their hardwork and sacrifice we shall be able to usher in a new era of hope and confidence among the people of this country, especially the toiling masses.

I congratulate all those friends who have been given these awards and I hope, Mr President, that with your encouraging words they will do their work with greater vigour, with more dedication, with a sense of duty and with a realization of their responsibility to bring a better tomorrow for the whole country.

A Parting Message

MY FELLOW CITIZENS, we have almost completed the process of democratic elections in this country. It is an experiment which has been successful for the last four decades in this country.

Recently there was apprehension in the minds of some people in this country and outside that democratic process will be eclipsed in this nation. But you by your judgement and maturity have once more expressed to the people of the whole world that the roots of democracy are deep in this country. I am glad that all of you have shown the courage, your conviction. There have been some problems in certain parts of the country but this is bound to be in such a large nation. By and large, the people have shown their sense of responsibility and duty towards the future of this country.

I know that there are certain elements in this country who are trying to create an atmosphere of discord in the name of religion and caste. It is not the atmosphere of confrontation but a spirit of reconciliation which is going to lead us out of this crisis.

We have to face the economic challenges of today. We must remember one thing: a country of India's size cannot be bailed out only by outside help; we shall have to depend upon ourselves. Everybody will have to make sacrifices. Everybody will have to make contributions. Austerity is not a mere slogan. It is a strategy.

We will have to cut our coat according to our cloth. I hope and trust that people in this country will be ready to make sacrifice in order to keep the dignity and honour of this nation.

I am glad that the people understand the challenges of today and the new Government will be able to take recourse to measures which will involve the people's cooperation because without the willing cooperation of the people it is not possible to bring a bright future for this country. Let us remember that willing cooperation is only possible when we assure the people that whatever they produce will go to meet the basic minimum needs of their children. Let us move in that direction. Let us hope to bring about a new tomorrow for the children of those who have been exploited and oppressed for long.

I trust that by united action, by cohesive effort, we shall be able to tide over the present crisis.

I am grateful to you for the confidence, for the cordiality and for the affection that you have extended to me.

I wish you all a very bright future.

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